DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 696 IR 015 504

TITLE	Oversight Hearing on the Use of Department of Education Funds. Hearing before the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, One Hundred Second Congress, First Session. (October 17, 1991).
INSTITUTION	Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. House Committee on Education and Labor.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-16-037284-4
PUB DATE	92
NOTE	64p.; Serial No. 102-80.
AVAILABLE FROM	U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402.
PUB TYPE	Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Accountability; *Agency Cooperation; Budgeting; *Educational Policy; Ethics; Federal Aid; Federal Government; Federal Legislation; Hearings; Junior High Schools; *Politics of Education; Presidents of the United States; Public Agencies; *Resource Allocation
IDENTIFIERS	Congress 102nd; *Department of Education

ABSTRACT

The oversight hearing documented in this report was convened to examine the expenditure of $26,750 to produce and televise an appearance by the President of the United States, George Bush, at Alice Deal Junior High School in Washington, District of Columbia, on October 1, 1991. In his opening address, Chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor William D. Ford argued that the use of Department of Education funds resulted in the potential politicizing of the Department of Education and endangered the working relationship between previous presidential administrations and the Department of Education and the Committee. In addition to the opening statements, the report contains prepared statements, letters, and supplemental materials that were entered into the record by Lamar Alexander, U.S. Secretary of Education; John A. Boehner, Representative from the State of Ohio; and William D. Ford, Representative from the State of Michigan. Also included in the report is the transcript of a detailed question and answer session between Secretary of Education Alexander and several of the Committee members. (DB)

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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON THE USE OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

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ED345696

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, OCTOBER 17, 1991

Serial No. 102-80

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
48-461 cc WASHINGTON : 1992

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402
ISBN 0-16-037284-4

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CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held in Washington, DC, October 17, 1991	1
Statement of:	
Alexander, Hon. Lamar, U.S. Secretary of Education, Department of Education	14
Prepared statements, letters, supplemental materials, et cetera:	
Alexander, Hon. Lamar, U.S. Secretary of Education, Department of Education, prepared statement of	18
Boehner, Hon. John A., a Representative in Congress from the State of Ohio, prepared statement of	50
Ford, Hon. William D., a Representative in Congress from the State of Michigan, letter dated November 14, 1991, to Hon. Lamar Alexander, with additional questions for the record and responses to same	51

OVERSIGHT HEARING ON THE USE OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1991

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 9 a.m., Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William D. Ford [Chairman] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Ford, Kildee, Martinez, Owens, Hayes, Sawyer, Payne, Unsoeld, Serrano, Andrews, Jefferson, Reed, Roemer, Olver, Goodling, Coleman, Petri, Roukema, Gunderson, Armey, Fawell, Henry, Ballenger, Molinari, Barrett, Boehner, and Klug.

Staff present: June Harris, legislative assistant; John F. Jennings, general counsel; Alan Lovesee, counsel; Patricia Rissler, staff director; Michael Russell, press coordinator; and Lynn Selmser, professional staff member.

Chairman FORD. The committee will come to order.

This morning we are pleased to have with us Secretary of Education, Lamar Alexander, who is here voluntarily in response to an invitation that I extended to him after conversations with him about the newspaper accounts starting with The Washington Post on the morning of October 2, where their headline, TV Technique 101 With George Bush.

That morning, we were scheduled to do important business here at the committee, but I couldn't get off the phone long enough to work because as soon as the Post hit people's front step in Washington, the phones began to ring at the Education and Labor Committee, wanting to know if we had gone to sleep, were we not watching the store, and those were the kindest things that were asked or suggested.

We had representatives of the Department here that morning because we were working on legislation and when I saw them, I immediately suggested that they contact the Secretary and ask him to quickly deny that the Department of Education was involved in this matter and the quicker the better so that we could put it to rest.

Unfortunately, the Secretary, who is being kept as busy as Secretary Baker traveling from one end of the country to the other, was not in town and it was late afternoon before we were able to get a response that, indeed, the Department of Education had cooperated with someone in the White House in transferring the funds, and,

therefore, Secretary Alexander and I had one, maybe two, lengthy discussions of this matter, and I have a pretty good idea what he is going to say here, and I felt that he ought to have the opportunity to say that publicly and to respond to the concerns of members of the committee that already exist or might exist after he makes his statement.

Mr. Secretary, I want to also say in preface that I apologize to you for the fact that my staff told me that by this morning I would have before me a GAO report that would indeed say that the transfer of funds was legal in the technical sense of that word, that no law was broken by the transfer of funds.

Unfortunately, our friends, yours and mine at the White House, derailed that for us. Last week, they told the GAO after the GAO, as we understand it, had received full cooperation from your Department and your lawyers and others contacted the White House and they were put off until yesterday, which bothered me somewhat, because by then they knew we had invited you here to have an interview with a general counsel.

He had to go to California yesterday and the result was that the GAO was left cooling its heels and was instructed that the White House would not engage in an interview about the expenditure of the funds and the transfer, but would respond to written questions from the GAO.

And I say this to indicate to you that I fully expected on the basis of preliminary information I had and the preliminary study that our people did that they would find a legal justification for what was done, and I can't understand why the people at the White House didn't understand the importance of having the GAO make that kind of a report here with or before your appearance in the committee.

I want you to know that we are not trying to hold back, and that I personally expect that at some stage the GAO will tell us that the transfer of funds was legal.

The hearing this morning is really to examine the expenditure of $26,750 in the Department of Education funds to produce and televise an appearance by President Bush at Alice Deal Junior High School in Washington on October 1 of this year.

As the Chairman of the committee charged with the authorization and implementation of education programs, I am very much interested in the justification and rationale for giving the White House scarce education funds to produce a media event.

By Washington's standards, $26,750 is not a lot of money. Back home in Michigan's 19th District where I come from, though, it would be enough money to send 53 of my constituents to Wayne County Community College for a whole semester and get them started on the education for the rest of their life.

The President might want to know that the $26,750 is also enough to provide 131 unemployed auto workers in Michigan with another week of unemployment compensation. So when it gets translated to the people, it is the kind of number they understand.

They may not understand millions; even fewer would understand trillions, but they understand $26,750 and they can make a quick translation of that into other uses.

Yes, I am very concerned about the White House spending education funds for a TV production, and I am having a tough time explaining it back home or to the people here who look to this committee for oversight on the Department of Education.

I am just as concerned, however, with the potential politicizing of the Department of Education. At a time of close cooperation between this committee and your Department, I do not appreciate our common goal of improving education for all Americans being tainted by interference from White House political operatives. Their involvement prompts several questions: That either the Bush-Quayle campaign or White House political operatives approach you to have the Department pay for the production of the President's speech—who orchestrated or concocted the eventual financial arrangements?

I have been operating on the assumption that you were busy doing important things and that some people over there talked to some people in your Department and some other eager people acted rather quickly.

I have been told that the regular communications people at the White House did not arrange this appearance by the President and the production, that a new person, called a special events coordinator, arranged it. At the last minute they discovered that none of the networks would carry the program except CNN, which was willing to carry it only as a straight news event with one camera focused on the President and no production staging of any kind. Then they discovered they didn't have available funding to pay for a private production company to do this and so somebody contacted somebody in the Department of Education and they volunteered to come up with the money, we are told, from your salary account over there.

Now, we don't know who has custody and control of the tapes or the master videotape. I have already told the Secretary that I came into possession of tapes of the program as it went out over CNN, and have already sent that tape, admittedly with political motives in mind on my part, to the Democratic National Committee with the suggestion that they should have people watch carefully, and as soon as the smiling faces of Alice Deal Junior High School children show up on a campaign commercial, they should be in the Federal Election Commission immediately with a complaint.

I have conveyed that to the Secretary. I have conveyed it to the Republicans on this committee and to a White House representative that talked to me, and I hope that by now we have the tape so thoroughly poisoned nobody would think of embarrassing the President further by trying to use it as a campaign instrument.

I know that it was not, I am willing to believe, the Secretary when he tells me that he did not suspect at any time that there was any purpose intended for campaign use in the making of the tape. These are the kind of questions I have, Mr. Secretary, and I would like to permit you, as soon as Mr. Goodling makes his opening statement, to proceed as you feel more comfortable and then perhaps respond to some questions from other members of the committee.

Mr. Secretary, I would just close my opening statement by saying even before speaking, don't let this happen again to your Depart-

ment. We finally have a good working relationship after years of adverse actions from previous administrations between the Department of Education and this committee.

I have commented frequently here during the consideration of the Higher Education Act, and also the bill that we will go back to as soon as we finish with you this morning, that we have had more actual interaction between the Department of Education and the committee on legislative matters of importance to the country than we have had in any previous period that I can remember under any President in modern times. Modern times means to me since Nixon. We did interact with Nixon for a while until Watergate and then something else got in the way.

But your Department has been more forthcoming and more involved than its immediate predecessors for a good many years and I don't want to see that affected by matters of this kind. We can't let campaign people who get overeager at the White House reach into your Department or any other department. I am sure other chairmen would feel the same way about departments that they feel the most responsibility toward, and politicize those departments in a way that gets in the way of us working together on the important purpose that we are both constituted for.

The work we are doing together to improve and expand educational opportunities for all Americans is too important, Mr. Secretary, and it is certainly worth more than $26,750.

With some feeling of sadness that this event had to occur, I want to compliment you on being forthcoming at every opportunity you have had in your busy schedule since this matter has come up, and I hope that this will be the end of it here today.

Mr. Goodling?

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would, first of all, ask that the GAO report of the eleventh, October 11, and the President's speech be included in the record of today's proceedings.

Chairman FORD. Without objection, so ordered.

[The October 11, 1991, GAO report and President's speech follows:]

GAO United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Office of the General Counsel

B-246130

October 11, 1991

The Honorable William D. Ford
Chairman, Committee on Education
and Labor
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This refers to your request, dated October 4, stemming from the President's speech at Alice Deal Junior High School. You refer in your letter to a report in the Washington Post that funds appropriated to the Department of Education were transferred to the White House in order to pay a private company to record the speech. You asked that we ascertain the facts concerning the use of these funds for that purpose, and that we provide a legal opinion on whether the actions taken comport with current law.

On Wednesday, October 9, after a Tuesday afternoon meeting with the Department of Education, we briefed your staff on our progress to date and discussed a timetable for subsequent work. Committee staff asked that we explain why we will not be able to provide definitive answers to all your questions by next Tuesday, and that we summarize the briefing.

The delay is due essentially to the need to gather information from the Department, the White House, and the news media and then, based on that information, to conduct a legal review of the issues raised. While these sources have been cooperative, it has not been possible to get all the necessary information in time for us to promise final answers before the hearing that we understand is now planned for October 17.

We are doing all we can to meet your needs. An oral request from your staff on October 7 that we address these questions preceded your letter, and we began our work immediately upon receiving that request. Among other things, we transmitted a list of questions to the Department. We also asked that

Department officials meet with us last week to answer those questions. However, as we advised your staff by letter dated October 4, Department officials said that they would be unable to provide the information we had asked for until October 8.

The Department met that commitment but in the meantime, as we gathered more information, we generated a second set of questions for the Department. Answers to those questions were received this morning, and we are now analyzing that information.

We have also transmitted questions to the White House, but we have been advised that the answers will not be available until next Wednesday at the earliest. We must allow for the possibility that additional information, even if received Wednesday, will raise issues that will require legal analysis and research, as well as possibly calling for further investigation.

I must also caution that all the information we have relied on to date is from the Department, and is unverified. In that connection, your staff asked that we corroborate with the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and Cable News Network (CNN) certain aspects of the Department's account, in particular the claim that the Department only realized at the eleventh hour that production of the broadcast by PBS or CNN would not be available. We are in the process of doing so, by seeking to talk to officials of the two networks and to White House officials. It is therefore possible that the account of the facts as ultimately developed may differ from that set forth below.

In the discussion below, we have elaborated on some points beyond what we told your staff, as a result of information received and analysis performed since the briefing. We have attempted to answer some of the questions, although we must caution, as noted above, that the answers assume that the facts provided by the Department are correct.

The speech was a joint initiative of the Department and the White House. At least from the Department's point of view, the objective was to produce a live broadcast to schools across the country. News coverage alone would not have achieved the Department's objective because it would not have assured that the speech could be received live by all the schools that were asked to watch it.

Department officials told us that they discovered, shortly before the speech, and after they had notified schools of the event, that the broadcast would not be generally available to classrooms under the then-current arrangements with PBS and CNN for coverage. The Department then agreed to transfer

funds to the White House so that the White House could arrange for production of the telecast.

The speech itself and the use of the Department's funds to support it, including the cost of the production contract, appear to be legal. The speech also does not appear to have violated the restrictions on the use of appropriations for publicity and propaganda.

The Education Department appropriation that was used--for Program Administration--is available for the award of contracts, as well as for salaries of Department personnel, as long as those contracts are for authorized purposes of the Department, as this one appears to us to have been. The purpose for which it was used in this case was to present in the schools a speaker who advocates policies that the Department is supposed to promote, and to assure that the message was delivered to a widespread audience of schoolchildren in what the Department considered to be a forceful and effective way.

We have reviewed the content of the President's speech and we believe it can be characterized as dealing with legitimate education concerns of the Department and the Administration, like the evils of drug abuse and the importance of education. These are issues of public and government concern. Appropriations are available for comments by the Chief Executive on such issues, without crossing the line that demarcates "publicity or propaganda," activities for which the use of appropriations is prohibited by law.

Moreover, the Department has specific statutory authority to inform the public about federally supported education programs. It is clear that the Department could itself have legally let the contract for production of the speech.

We also believe, based on our present understanding of the facts, that the transfer of funds and the interagency agreement between the White House and the Department were proper. The Department cites as authority the so-called Economy Act, which permits agencies to enter into such agreements if, among other things, the head of the ordering agency determines that the order is in the best interest of the United States, and that the service cannot be provided as conveniently or cheaply by a commercial enterprise.

The Department asserts that under the circumstances these conditions were met, and we have so far found no basis on which to disagree. Moreover, the Department has authority independent of the Economy Act to enter into such agreements with other agencies as the Secretary determines to be necessary or appropriate to carry out his functions. This

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latter provision, unlike the Economy Act, does not require a finding that the interagency contract is either cheaper or more convenient than an arrangement with a commercial enterprise.

We cannot answer the question of the propriety of the award of the contract by the White House without more data. Department officials told us that they were not involved in that transaction and referred us to the White House. We have provided a list of our questions to White House officials but they have advised that it is likely to be Wednesday, October 16, at the earliest before they can respond.

We will keep your staff fully apprised of our progress.

Sincerely yours,

Barry R. Bedrick
Associate General Counsel

B-246130

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release October 1, 1991

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN NATIONAL EDUCATION ADDRESS

Alice Deal Junior High School
Washington, D.C.

12:18 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ms. Mosteller, and thanks for allowing me to visit your classroom to talk to you and all these students, and millions more in classrooms all across the country.

You know, long before I became President I was a parent. I remember the times that my kids came up with a really tough question or a difficult decision. I tried my best never to shut them down with a quick" no." I would simply say those three magic words that made that problem disappear: "Ask your Mother." (Laughter.)

Let me tell you why I've made the trip up from the White House to Alice Deal Junior High. I'm not here to teach a lesson. You already have a very good teacher. I'm not here to tell you what to do or what to think. Maybe you're accustomed to adults talking about you and at you -- well, today, I'm here to talk to you and challenge you. Education matters, and what you do today, and what you don't do can change your future.

Every day, we hear more bad news about our schools. Maybe you saw today's headline -- I don't know if you had a chance to look at it -- about the release of the new National Goals Report. Get the camera to come in and take a look at this for a moment. In math, for instance, this national report card shows that, nationwide, five of six 8th graders don't know the math they need to move up to the 9th grade.

In spite of troubling statistics like this one, I don't see this report, however, as just bad news, and I'll tell you why. This report tells us a lot about what you know and what you don't know. It gives us something to build on. It shows us our strengths and the weaknesses that we've got to correct. It sets forth a challenge to all of us: Work harder, learn more, revolutionize American education.

I know you've heard about stanines and percentiles, surveys and statistics, but here's what all that fancy talk really means: Education means the difference between a good future and a lousy one. Reports don't give us the right to make excuses. Our scores will tell us where we are and where we need to go.

I mentioned earlier the bad news we hear about schools today. But what we don't hear enough about are the success stories. You know, all over America, thousands of schools do succeed, even against tough odds, even against all odds. Kids from all over the District of Columbia petition to get into Alice Deal School here because parents know this school works. It works because of teachers like the one standing over here, Ms. Mosteller, who decided at the age of 28 -- maybe you all know this, but a lot of people around the

MORE

country don't -- she decided at the age of 25 that she wanted to teach. She was standing in a supermarket checkout line when she saw a magazine ad about college. She went back to school, worked her way through in seven years, waiting tables to pay tuition. She made it. and so can you.

This school here works because of students like the ones with me today -- students like Rachel Rusch -- where's Rachel? Right there, okay -- a member of Alice Deal's award-winning "Math Counts" team. Rachel, you tell me if I'm wrong, but you and six other students in this class alone have taken part in the Johns Hopkins Talent Search. They took the college entrance exams on an experimental basis last year as 7th graders. Even in junior high, some of them scored well enough to get into college right now. So let's just put it on the line. You've got the brains. Now, put them to work -- certainly, not for me, but for you.

Progress starts when we ask more of ourselves, our schools and, yes, you, our students. We made a start nationally now by setting six National Education Goals to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. By the year 2000, at least nine in every 10 students should graduate from high school. We should be first in the world in math and science. We need to regularly test student's abilities. Every American child should start school ready to learn; every American adult should be literate; and every American school should be safe and drug-free. Reaching these goals is the aim of a strategy that we call America 2000 -- a crusade for excellence in American education -- school by school, community by community.

But what does all this mean -- you might say, what is he doing, what does this all mean for the students right here in this room? Fast-forward -- five years from now. Unless things change, between now and 1996 as many as one in four of today's 8th graders will not graduate with their class. In some cities, the dropout rate is twice that high or higher. Imagine: Out of a total of nearly three million of your fellow classmates nationwide, an army of more than half a million dropouts.

I ask every student watching today: Look around you. Count four students -- start with yourself. No one dreams of becoming a dropout, but far too many do. Which one of you won't make it through school?

The fact is, every one of you can. Let's make a pact then right here. Let's work to see that five years from now, you and your friends will be more than sad statistics. Give yourself a decent shot at your dreams. Stay in school. Get that diploma.

Let's go back to the future. In the fall of 1996 -- five years from now -- nearly half of today's 8th graders who get their diplomas will enter the working world. More than half the graduates will stay in school -- and become the college class of the year 2000.

The question each student watching today should ask is: Where will I be -- where will I be five years from now? Will I be holding down a good job and maybe working toward a better one, or will I be out of school and out of work? Will I be on a college campus -- or out running the streets?

Think about that tonight when you're at a kitchen table doing some homework; while your parents are meeting your teachers like so many millions do this year at back-to-school nights all across our great country.

I'm asking you to put two and two together: Make the connection between the homework you do tonight, the test you take tomorrow and where you'll be five, 15, even 50 years from now. You

MORE

see, the real world doesn't begin somewhere else, some time way down there in the distant future. The real world starts right here. What you do here will have consequences for your whole lives.

Let me tell you something -- many of you may find very hard to believe this. You're in control. You're thinking: How can the President say that about kids like us when we don't even have our driver's license? But think about it, and you'll see what I mean.

Think about drugs. You see films. You hear police experts and tough speakers from the outside. You get stern lectures from everyone -- movie stars, athletes, teachers, parents, friends. But you know and I know that all the drug prevention programs, all the pledges, all the preaching in the world won't pull you through that critical moment when someone offers drugs. At that moment, everything comes down to you. Yes or no -- you've got to choose, and the answer will change your life. Your parents won't make the decision. Your teachers won't make the decision. Your friends won't make the decision. It's up to you. It takes guts to take control.

A sound body and a sound mind -- they go together -- as my friend -- and he is a friend -- Arnold Schwarzenegger says. He's crossing the nation talking with students about the importance of fitness. And real fitness means no drugs.

Studies show a decline in drug use -- and that's good, that's encouraging, I think. And every student who draws the line against drugs really deserves credit for that. But drugs and violence continue to threaten every school, every small town and suburb in America. And as students, you have a right to be physically safe at school. You should never have to worry that a quarrel in the hallway will lead to gunfire in the playground. Fear should never follow you into the classroom.

If you have to take the long way home after school so you don't cross paths with the gang hanging on the corner, if outsiders roam the halls of your school hassling kids, hassling students, you must take control. Go to your teacher, or go to your principal, or go to your parents -- as difficult as it may be, go to the school board if you have to. Demand discipline. If good people chicken out, bad people take control. Together, we can -- I really believe this -- we can drive the drugs and guns and senseless violence out of our schools.

When it comes to your own education, what I'm saying is take control. Don't say school is boring and blame it on your teachers. Make your teachers work hard. Tell them you want a first-class education. Tell them that you're here to learn.

Block out the kids who think it's not cool to be smart. I can't understand for the life of me what's so great about being stupid. If someone goofs off today, are they cool? Are they still cool years from now when they're stuck in a dead-end job? Don't let peer pressure stand between you and your dreams.

Take control -- challenge yourself. Only you know how hard you work. Maybe you can fake -- maybe, just maybe you can fake your way into a job -- but you won't keep it for long if you don't have the know-how to get the job done. Maybe you can cram the week before that marking period ends, and turn that C into a B. But you can't con your way past the SAT and into college. If you don't work hard, who gets hurt? If you cheat, who pays the price? If you cut corners, if you hunt for the easy A, who comes up short? Easy answer to that one! You do.

You're in control -- but you are not alone. People want you to succeed. They want to help you succeed. Here at Deal.

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teachers like your outstanding teacher standing here with us today, Ms. Mostoller -- from your principal, Mr. Moss, to your custodian, Mr. Francis. Right now in classrooms across this country -- in the communities you call home -- when things get tough, when answers are hard to come by -- there's a teacher, a parent, a friend or family member ready to help you. They want to see you make it.

If you take school seriously, you won't have to settle for a job -- just any job. You'll have a career. If you make it your business to learn, one day you'll be a better parent. You may not think about it now, but one day your children will want to look up at you and say, "I've got the smartest Mom and Dad in the world." Don't disappoint them.

Let me leave you with a simple message: Every time you walk through that classroom door, make it your mission to get a good education. Don't do it just because your parents -- or even the President -- tells you. Do it for yourselves. Do it for your future. And while you're at it, help a little brother or sister to learn -- or maybe even Mom or Dad. Let me know how you're doing. Write me a letter -- and I'm serious about this one -- write me a letter about ways you can help us achieve our goals. I think you know the address.

Now we're going to walk over to the school auditorium to say hello to the rest of the student body. To all the students across the country who watched us here in this great classroom today, may I simply say thank you and good luck to you this school year.

And now, Ms. Mostoller, if you'll kindly lead the way. Thank you all very much. Nice to be with you. (Applause.)

END 13:37 P.M. EDT

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Chairman, I would like to welcome the Secretary back to the hearing this morning, and thank him for taking the time to be with us. The subject of the hearing is the use of Department of Education funds to televise a speech by President Bush to the Nation's school children.

I saw the tape at home. I saw the tape, again, when I came back to DC. I happen to think it was probably the best thing we have done for education in my 17 years in the Congress of the United States and would hope that we could find money somewhere that the President could go to a school in everybody's congressional district throughout the United States and give that same message. It would be far superior to anything that you and I can do and probably far superior to what the teachers and the coaches can do day after day because students don't usually sit up and take notice when we speak.

So I thought it was one of the better messages that I have seen. The message from the President was simple and clear, education is important, you have to work hard to succeed, stay off drugs, do your homework, don't watch so much television. They aren't political messages, in my estimation. This is advice offered by the President of the United States to the school children of America and it is good advice.

I believe that this was an appropriate use of the Department's funds. I believe the public was well-served by this use of their tax dollars and I should note that the General Accounting Office has been asked by the Majority to look into the propriety of the use of the funds.

So far, they say the speech itself and the use of the Department's funds to support it, including the cost of the production contract, appear to be legal. The speech also does not appear to have violated the restrictions on the use of appropriations for publicity and propaganda.

The Education Department's appropriation that was used for program administration is available for the award of contracts as well as for salaries of department personnel as long as those contracts are for authorized purposes of the department as this one appears to us to have been.

The purpose for which it was used in this case was to present in the schools a speaker who advocates policies that the Department is supposed to promote and to assure that the messages delivered to a widespread audience of school children in what the Department considered to be a forceful and effective way.

We have reviewed the content of the President's speech. We believe it can be characterized as dealing with legitimate education concerns of the Department and the administration, such as the evils of drug abuse and the importance of education.

Every one of us here on the committee and in the House of Representatives, or at least most everyone uses public funds to communicate our message to our constituency. I would imagine we spend $26,750 an hour downstairs in the TV and the radio studio. I am not sure what we spend, but we spend a bundle.

I think I spend it legitimately. I think I send good messages back to my constituency. I am sure that it helps at election time, also,

but nevertheless, they are messages that should go back to my constituency.

The President is between a rock and a hard place or the devil and the deep blue sea because he is constantly criticized by the Democrat side. He doesn't pay enough attention to domestic policies. And then when he does something on the domestic front, he is criticized for doing that, and that makes it pretty difficult.

But his shoulders are broad. I am sure he will continue to do what he believes is right.

I agree that the President's message was a message that should be spread throughout this country, and I hope we will find, as I said earlier, a means to have him spread that message more often.

I am a little concerned about a picture that I might use in a political brochure which shows me having lunch in a school lunch setting. I am a little worried that a picture I might have with the Secretary of Agriculture looking at the horrible drought situation in my district, if I use that in a brochure, I am concerned that perhaps that won't be legitimate. I, of course, will get the proper clearance from the all important Ethics Committee before I do that.

But, again, I compliment you for the message that was concluded. I believe it was a good message for the children of the United States.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Chairman, are we going to go——

Chairman FORD. Would you withhold until the Secretary has had a chance to make his statement?

Mr. ARMEY. Are you asking me to withhold out of deference to the Secretary?

Chairman FORD. Yes, sir.

Mr. ARMEY. Most certainly. Thank you.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Alexander?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE LAMAR ALEXANDER, SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Armey, Mr. Goodling.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your comments, and let me start sort of where you have finished your statement.

As you know, I consider it a privilege to come here. I respect you and this committee. To me, you represent tens of thousands of Americans and you are working on what most Americans feel is the most important set of subjects we have in the domestic arenas today.

The annual Phi Delta Kappan Gallup survey of attitudes toward education the other day showed that when you ask Americans to rate what is very important, 41 percent will say having the strongest military is very important for the next 25 years; 65 percent will say having the most efficient system of industrial production is very important for America for the next 25 years; and 89 percent will say having the best education system in the world is very important for America for the next 25 years. So for us to be here, to be under lights with cameras, in a position so that people can see and hear us all over America, for you, then, to be able to hold a

hearing later today on the America 2000 legislation or the different legislation that Mr. Kildee and Mr. Goodling have suggested so that people all over America can hear it is very important for Americans.

For Members of Congress to go on the House Floor and say in 1-minute speeches how they feel about grants and loans that help half of American students go to colleges and university about giving parents a broader choice of schools, about all the important education issues, that is very important. For Members of Congress to go to the House recording studio which has 38 employees and spends $1.7 million a year—415 out of 435 Members of the House did that in the last year, I think that is very important.

And I guess what I would like to do today is to demonstrate clearly my respect for this committee and for this subject and to say that I will try to come here any time you invite me, and that I am proud of the fact that in a number of instances that we have been able to work in a bipartisan way to try to advance the work in higher education and the work in elementary and secondary education.

I am grateful for that and I believe the county respects that. And I don't want to do anything that would for a minute lose that bipartisan sense of cooperation that is hard to develop in Washington. But at the same time, I would like to say as gently as I could, Mr. Chairman, that I think we have a little bit of a disagreement here about what is appropriate.

What we are talking about is whether it is appropriate for the taxpayers to spend $26,750 to pay for lights such as these lights, cameras such as these cameras, a remote truck and uplink signal so that the President of the United States can go to a seventh grade classroom and speak to the children of America about the value of education. That is what we are talking about.

Unless I am missing something here, that seems to be exactly what the President ought to be doing and exactly what the Department of Education ought to be paying for. There is no question about whether it is legal for us to pay. For us to be engaged in activities of the type I just described is specifically authorized by this Congress. For us to transfer funds to the White House or any other agency for this sort of activity is specifically authorized by this Congress. So I am trying to get in my mind why it would even be at issue with anyone.

Some members of the committee suggested we show the President's speech. I thought that would take too much time away from the work you are going to be getting onto later this morning in trying to develop the Elementary and Secondary Act.

So let me see if I can sum it up this way. I think maybe we are talking about a little misunderstanding about communications.

What is our education problem in America? It is as much as anything one of attitudes. We have a skills and knowledge gap and most people don't believe it. Children are growing up differently today and most people don't know it and they don't believe it. Our schools are archaic, out of date, designed for another time and most people don't believe it. Adults even need to go back to school and while more are, most people don't believe it.

So what needs to be done more than anything else is for respected figures in America to speak to the American people and cause us to change our minds and to take actions ourselves for what needs to be done.

Now, in America we have been doing that with drugs, and the demand for drugs is going down. The most antidrug group in America today is 9 to 12 year olds. I see it in our own son. We have done that before I got here with smoking and people have changed their attitudes about smoking.

People have changed their attitudes in America about recycling. I can remember the moment my daughter escorted me to the garbage and pointed out where the Coke can goes, and all over America people have changed their attitudes. So we need to change the minds of Americans about the value of education and what there is to do. So the question is what is the best way to do that.

Well, the single most important person for helping change the attitudes of America is the President of the United States. There are many audiences that the President should talk directly to, but there is none more important than the students themselves, and that is what he did on October 1 in Ms. Mostoller's seventh grade classroom in Alice Deal Junior High School in Washington.

Now, just to be very technical for a moment, the networks would cover it, but they wouldn't pay for production. That would mean, as if we have cameras here, and it would mean that there would be a line outside but there would be no cameras and there would be no lights. It would be as if having the lights off and asking the cameras to leave the room. We could do that but it surely wouldn't serve the public's interest.

So what taxpayers' money was used for was as if it had been a telephone call we would have been paying for the telephone in that case. This idea would have come up almost from any American, the idea of the President talking to school children. It came up in a variety of places in our department, in the White House, I remember at the meeting of the President's advisory committee on education, which includes people from the President of the PTA to people like former Senator Brock and the head of the NEA and the AFT. We had a full discussion on July 29 about how could the President do more to help advance transforming American education. And a variety of people suggested that one of the best things the President could do was to speak directly to school children shortly after they went back to school.

I remember vividly the PTA president talking about it, the National PTA. And making sure we understood some schools were year-round schools so that when the President welcomed the students back to a new school year, he didn't say welcome back because some children are there all the time.

So I have been around the country a little bit and you were kind enough to wait a few days for me to come up here and I am grateful for that.

I have heard a number of people mention the speech. They are delighted with it. They think it is exactly what the President should be doing. Children have written the President; they have written us. I have not heard one person outside of Washington—I haven't heard many here—even raise a question about whether the

President of the United States should make a speech to school children about the value of education, and whether the Department of Education should help pay for the production costs.

My own suggestion would be, respectfully, that Members of Congress take this tape that was made with this money, take it back to their districts, give it to every school and show it to the children. My suggestion, respectfully, would be that Members of Congress go down to your own recording studios and make your own tape about the value of education and take it back to your district, and if you can't go to every school, give one of your tapes to every school.

When the President made his speech, he invited all the governors to also address school children about the value of education and many did, Democrats and Republicans. So I am happy to stay here as long as you would like for me today or to come back at another time and talk about this, but what I would hope is that given a large number of very important issues there are concerning education before this committee now, and given the spirit of bipartisan cooperation that we have, that we could get beyond this pretty quickly and move on to such things as the Higher Education Act, the America 2000 legislation, and the new generation of American schools.

Thank you for inviting me to come.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Lamar Alexander follows:]

Honorable Lamar Alexander
U.S. Secretary of Education
Before the
House Committee on Education and Labor
October 17, 1991

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Thank you for inviting me to be here. It is always a privilege to testify before the House Committee on Education and Labor.

The Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup survey of attitudes toward education recently reported that 89 percent of Americans believe that having the best education system in the world is more important to our nation's future than having the strongest system of industrial production or even the strongest military. Education is dinner table talk in America today. Education is at the heart of most of our domestic concerns.

So I find myself hoping that given all of the important education concerns that this committee has before it, we would not spend too much time talking about whether the U.S. Department of Education should have spent $26,750 to help pay to broadcast a speech by the President of the United States to the nation's school children about the value of education.

I thought it was wonderful that the President of the United States would take time from his extremely busy schedule to use his bully pulpit to encourage children to take their education more seriously. I'm sure virtually every American feels the same way.

There is no better role model to speak to the children about education than the President of the United States.

On October 1, 1991, President Bush visited Ms. Mostoller's seventh grade classroom at Alice Deal Junior High School in Washington, D.C. He spoke to those children directly, in their classroom. His speech was broadcast to children in classrooms all over America and taped to be sent to those schools which did not have facilities to receive the speech. The President invited each of the nation's Governors to follow his talk with remarks of their own and many did.

In his speech, the President conveyed a message all educators and parents want our children to hear. The President's speech focused on themes that Congress, the Administration, and the Nation's Governors have identified as key to improving the quality of American education. They include:

- Taking control of one's lives and dreams;
- Staying in school;
- Staying off drugs;
- Demanding violence-free schools; and,
- Working hard on homework can make the difference between a great future and a lousy one.

The Department of Education was grateful that the President of the United States was willing to help deliver our education reform message. The Department of Education's Organization Act authorizes the Department to assume a leadership role in promoting improvements in education. Section 102 of the Department's Organization Act, 20 USC 3402, states that one of the purposes of the Department is "to supplement and complement the efforts of States, local school systems, private educational

institutions, parents, and students to improve the quality of education and, to promote improvements in the quality and usefulness of education through federally supported research, evaluation, and sharing of information."

In addition, section 422 of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S.C. 1231a, directs the Secretary "to inform the public on federally supported education programs," and confers broad authority on the Secretary as to the means employed. The Department transferred $26,750 to the White House to help pay for staff, cameras, lighting and other production needs. These funds transferred to the White House were appropriated by Public Law 101-517 for Departmental program administration and were broadly available for costs associated with carrying out the Department's responsibilities. In addition, section 415 of the Department of Education's Organization Act, 20 U.S.C. 3475 and the so-called "Economy Act," 31 U.S.C. 1535 authorized the Department to transfer funds to other Federal entities that are in a position to assist the Department to perform its mission.

We agreed to help pay the production costs because, only a few days before the speech, the networks, which agreed to carry the address, declined to produce it themselves. So, the Department transferred $26,750 to the White House to help defray the production costs associated with broadcasting the President's speech.

The President's speech was very much like thousands of other

education and policy speeches broadcast live or on tape each year by Governors, Members of Congress and other public officials. Governors and Members of Congress have bully pulpits too, and today's bully pulpit is a microphone and a camera.

I have been across the country a good bit since the President spoke and I can tell you that from comments I have received and from letters to the Department, I know that teachers and children looked forward to the President's broadcast and were excited about it. It is something the children will always remember.
One Chicago school principal, Dollie Felicetti, of Wilson School District 170 in Chicago Heights, Illinois, wrote to me even before the President gave his speech. She said: "We will be proud to 'tune in' to the President on that day and pledge our support of the National Goals. We may be little (we're kindergarten through third) but we're mighty."

One eighth grader from Houston, Texas wrote to the President after watching his speech at his school:

> Dear Mr. President: "I enjoyed your speech ... I think it's good for students to know that studying hard and making A's is good and not dorky."

Another wrote:

> Dear Mr. President: ... Personally, I agree with you because what you were talking about was just what happened to me... in the 7th grade .... I hated teachers, I hated work, and to sum it all up I hated everything but drugs and my so called friends... In

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conclusion, I would like to tell you to keep pushing for education and a drug-free society. It might help someone ...P.S. say 'Hi' to Barbara for me."

And 10 year old Ryan McCoy at Crestview Elementary in Topeka, Kansas said after watching the President:

"We should pay attention and try to do the best we can in school."

Mr. Chairman, since taking office, our President has worked in a bipartisan way to transform education in our nation. For example:

- At the historic Charlottesville Education Summit, the nation's Governors and the President set in motion the establishment of the National Education Goals.
- In 1990, he established with the Governors the National Education Goals Panel, most recently under the leadership of Colorado Governor Romer and South Carolina Governor Campbell;
- Earlier this year, he worked with the Congress, and especially Congressmen Kildee and Goodling of this Committee, to establish the National Council on Education Standards and Testing, which will work toward establishing a voluntary system of national testing;
- Together, the Congress and the President formed the National Commission on Time and Learning, which will report back in two years its finding with regard to the relationship between the length of the school day and year to learning;
- The President worked with Representatives Goodling and Sawyer and Senator Simon, and many other Members of Congress, to develop the National Literacy Act, which was just signed into law a few months ago;
- This spring, the President initiated the AMERICA 2000 education strategy to engage the American people in a national crusade to achieve the National Education Goals. Already, twelve states, including seven with Democrat Governors, have kicked off AMERICA 2000

efforts. The President and I have encouraged Members of Congress from both parties to organize AMERICA 2000 communities, and to promote educational reform, by encouraging communities to:

1. Adopt the national education goals for their community;
2. Craft a local strategy to meet the goals;
3. Design a Report Card to measure results;
4. Plan for and support a New American school;

- This summer, at the President's urging, American business leaders, Republicans and Democrats, joined together to establish the New American Schools Development Corporation and have to date raised over $30 million;
- Earlier this year, we submitted reauthorization proposals to the Congress for our higher education and educational research offices, and have worked in a bipartisan fashion with Congress throughout the reauthorization process;
- And, finally, Mr. Chairman, the President sent his AMERICA 2000 legislation to the Congress earlier this year. From the outset, as I am sure all Members of this Committee can attest, the Administration has sought the bipartisan support, advice, and cooperation for its consideration and passage.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by reiterating my appreciation for this invitation. I will always be glad to come see you personally or to visit with this committee and to talk about anything you would like to discuss. But, I would think the American people would expect us to agree quickly that the President's speech to school children was exactly the right thing for him to be doing and exactly the right thing for the U.S. Department of Education to help pay for. Common sense clearly tells us that and so do the statutes and programmatic authorities Congress has written.

I would hope that as quickly as possible we could move on to discussing those larger proposals that will help transform American education, including the work you and other committee members have been doing on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, as well as the President's America 2000 proposals. Creating a new generation of American schools, beginning massive teacher retraining, rewarding merit schools, giving parents a broader choice of the schools their children attend, and establishing a voluntary national examination system called the American Achievement Test, are critical components of the President's program.

Thank you. I would be pleased to try to answer any questions you might have.

Chairman FORD. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I would like to proceed back and forth. We will start over here with Mr. Kildee.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I have always said nice things about you and will continue to do so and that is not a hard thing to do. I think you are a good thing for education.

I have worked with many secretaries of education and I have enjoyed working with you probably more than any of the others that I have worked with. We don't always agree, but we are able to sit down and work out our areas of disagreement.

You have always tried to seek within the parameters you think are important accommodation rather than confrontation and I think we have had some fruitful production from that.

I do wish you had not let the White House lift the $26,750 from the education budget. I think it would have been preferable had they used their own White House funds. They had adequate funds over there. We generally take pretty good care of the White House budget.

I say that because I have served on the Budget Committee for 3 years now and in those 3 years we have been quite successful in trying to increase the education budget. The first year I was put on there by Speaker Wright, $1.7 billion increase, the second year, $3.4 million increase. This year I was able to get $2 billion in committee and Mr. Ford's amendment got another 400 million on the Floor. And that was very difficult because we are competing, and I think that when we find money being used in the education budget in this fashion, it just makes our work a little more difficult.

Very often we have to look not only at substance, but at appearance. And I think being sensitive on appearance is very important. When I go back next year in the Budget Committee on which I serve and ask for education dollars, I need all the tools possible and not have little things like this have them saying, well, that is how they use their money when the White House budget is adequate to take care of that itself. So I would hope in the future if the White House wants to do something like, that they use the ample funds which we have appropriated for them and that is really all I have to say, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Kildee, I appreciate your comment and I appreciate your bipartisan leadership. I hear what you are saying and I will try to—I will certainly respect it and I will try to understand it.

I would only say as gently and respectfully as I could, that I can't think of any better investment of 26,750 of our dollars than helping to make sure the President of the United States can speak directly to school children about the value of education. So that is why we did it and I don't want to come up here and act like I didn't know about it or wasn't responsible for it or that I wish I hadn't done it because I think it was exactly what we should have been doing.

Mr. KILDEE. From the beginning you have been open and honest on this and that is very, very important in our relationship between yourself and the Congress of the United States, but I do think when you look at sources of money and look at appearance

and substance, that if the White House were really strapped for money, that might be another thing, but they really aren't strapped for money. The Appropriation Committee takes good care of them over there and I think they could have reached into their very deep pockets and found a similar amount of money there. That is all I have to say.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Coleman?

Mr. COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Secretary Alexander.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Mr. Coleman.

Mr. COLEMAN. I want to congratulate the committee for being able to do what we haven't been able to do before and that is generate interest in what we are doing in this committee. I had to crawl in the hall outside over the hardware and the television cameras. I note at the current time we have four cameras in the room. The American people are being treated to the trivialization of education. We are marking up a $100 billion Higher Education Act.

I welcome all of our media friends to return next week to see how we do on that particular bill, which is a few more dollars than $26,000. The public sees through most of this and will take it for what it is, another attempt to try to embarrass the political establishment on one side or the other.

When we get through bashing Congress ourselves we will bash the executive branch and then the executive branch will come back in some way and bash us again. Isn't it wonderful? Isn't it great? It is a great sport here in Washington and pretty soon the American people are going to say what are these people up to? They are already asking that.

Now, what we are up to, I guess, is that my crude calculation here that the House recording studio spends $7,000 a day churning out media information, information that we think is very important. I happen to think what the President did was very important, too. I don't think that we need to go around and criticize the House recording studio for spending $7,000 a day, anymore than we have to, criticize the Education Department for spending $26,000.

In fact, Mr. Secretary, I will bet we would criticize you and the President for not speaking out because we have given you a mandate in the Federal law. That law was written by President Bush. It wasn't written by Secretary Alexander. It was written by the people of this committee and in this Congress. And in several instances that law cites specifically that the Department of Education, one of its main missions, is to supplement and compliment local school systems and also the sharing of information on Federal programs.

The law also goes on in another section to require informing the public on federally-supported education programs. Now, having the President of the United States, who has the biggest audience that you can have in this country, talk about education, the reforms that are necessary, I would call that educational information; I would call that distributing information, sharing information. That is our mandate to you, and I am glad to see for the first time in many years that you are taking that mandate seriously and that you are trying to disseminate this information and the changes that we must incur.

So I think this is a tempest in a tea pot. I wish we would get on with the real business of passing some reform legislation and dealing with major issues, the $100 billion on Higher Education Act. That is real money, that is real important, and I think that we ought to pay our attention and our time to that.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman FORD. Gentleman from New York?

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Secretary, I think there are two basic issues here. One is a concern of the American people. They seem to be quite concerned about micro expenditures by the government. I think it has become quite trivial, some of the kinds of things the press has led people to be concerned about, the furor about the banking at the House of Representatives and the parking tickets and on and on it goes, and, of course, there are some people who are concerned about paid staff walking the dogs of the President or what kind of alcoholic beverages are served at State dinners and who pays for that and you can go on and on.

Cabinet offices have kitchens and some of them have chefs, I understand. I think if people are really concerned about this there may be more and more investigation of the micro expenditures and exactly what is money going for for these small expenditures and how it adds up.

Of course, when you retire, there is still a provision, that will appropriate $10,000 to paint your portrait, which I have always fought. I don't think you deserve it. I have always said why don't they get young artists and not have the American people pay $10,000 to paint the portrait of cabinet members.

I gave a long list of expenditures which I would question. I think if the American people really want to take a look at some of those expenditures and maybe we can save some money. They might take a look at the $16 million that the President has for his press and public relations and opinion surveys and they keep their hand on the pulse of America with a very well-oiled apparatus there, and I just wonder if we need that much money to be spent on public relations and opinion gathering, the whole set of activities that really don't do that much to advance government but they do a great deal in terms of the protection of the people in power. I would include congressional recording studios and all of that we ought to take a look at.

But that is one issue. The other issue is the issue of expenditures for education and I am an advocate of maximum dissemination of information about education, especially useful information that should go to teachers, to parents, and everybody concerned about education.

The question is was this a good use of money to pay for dissemination of useful information about education and exactly what is the content of what was done there. I have serious questions about the content that was done there because it is the issue of what is substance in terms of education information and what is propaganda in terms of the position of the administration on items such as Choice or even America 2000. A lot of America 2000 is useful, a great deal of it is packaging, very good packaging for a product, and a lot of substance is missing there.

So we are really pushing a party platform, administration position which has no foundation in the legislation offered and we are promoting a package which does not have a foundation in legislation, so that it is a questionable area. Given the fact it is a questionable area, the expenditure of $24,000 or $2,500 is questionable when you consider the state of education in this country at this point.

If you look at today's New York Times, you will see some concrete examples of what the schools are going through in New York as a result of budget cuts. And that is not unique to New York City or to other cities at all, it is a case across the country with devastating budget cuts have really hurt the forward progress of education not only in the big cities but also in the suburbs. The money is just not there.

We need a revenue sharing provision for education right away so that money from the Federal Government, that is not the Federal Government's money, came from the citizens originally, so it should be returned to them to help with this crisis in education funding.

So $24,000 or $2,500, any amount of money, would be welcome to go into a pot which would increase the Federal percentage of education expenditures. We went down from 8 percent to 7 percent under the Republican administration, Reagan and now President Bush. We would like to go back to 8 percent and see it climb even further in terms of the percentage of Federal money going into education. It is the spirit of the principle of what this means I think that is very important. At a time when we are counting pennies and every effort is being made to hold down the authorizations to the level of the previous appropriation and even beyond that, in previous expenditures, there is a squeeze on by Office of Management and Budget for every penny. We find it quite disturbing that this kind of expenditure could take place, and I think it is not a trivial matter at all.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Owens. I am glad to see you and appreciate your comments.

If I might make two very brief responses, I don't think $26,000 is a trivial amount of money and I think 99 percent of Americans would agree that probably the single best investment we can make on behalf of transforming America in education would be to spend $26,750 for the President of the United States to speak directly to school children everywhere in America about the value of education.

What you talked about was taking control of their lives and dreams, about staying in school, about staying off drugs, about keeping their school free from violence, about working hard on their homework. I think it is something that children in this country will never forget. And it would have cost more to write every child a one page letter from me and mail it to them. So I think it was a terrific investment and a wonderful thing for him to do and I really can't imagine that anybody thinks otherwise.

I could get into some sort of clever political debate back and forth on the other points that you mentioned. I mean, if $26,000 is important, we can save money by not spending $7 million at the House recording studio every year for the same purpose. But that

is not going to serve any good purpose for me to try to argue with you about that. You are trying to improve education. You are in an important position here. I am trying to do my part and I think the best thing we can do is agree that the President's speech to the school children about the value of education is a wonderful thing and get on to some of these other issues that you have talked about, like research and creating a new generation of American schools, and massive teacher retraining, several of the things the President has proposed several other things that members of this committee has proposed.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Petri?

Mr. PETRI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I can't help sitting here and thinking that if the President hadn't gone to spend that time to visit that school, if you hadn't helped him get his message across to the people, sometime later people would be asking why isn't he using his office to emphasize the importance of education? Here he said he would be the education President and he hasn't gone to a school to talk to kids about the importance of education. I supported the creation of the separate Department of Education in part because I thought, well, the Federal Government spends a very small percentage of the total amount of our national expenditure on education but it does have an important leadership role in the area of education and we should try to emphasize the importance of that whole enterprise for students and for our country. You helped to further that by convincing the President to spend some time, and I know he wants to spend time on education and a variety of other issues but he is tugged in 101 different directions and he needs to do it efficiently and well. He can't go to every classroom in America and talk. He has got to use the communication tools to do it and so I think myself, whether the money comes from the Education Department or the White House budget, it is still taxpayers' money and on balance this is a good way to reach an awful lot of people efficiently and use the great magic and power of the Presidency for good.

So thank you for being here to explain it and I think you have done a good job.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Hayes?

Mr. HAYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will be brief and candid. I talked about the problem that we are faced with when it comes to our public education system, particularly in my area. Access to education is something I don't recall having read that the President addressed himself to.

It is a contradiction to me to veto a bill that would extend the unemployment compensation benefits to some of the parents of some of these kids in my area, who went to school this morning hungry.

How can you learn hungry? It is a contradiction to me to talk about diminishing funds for Head Start, a program which has been very successful in many areas. So, just to talk about educating kids and don't put into action a measure that will give them that opportunity, we seem to be having a very, very great contradiction.

I have to believe that to some extent, and I will be very honest with you, and I don't blame you, I have a lot of respect for you as

the Secretary of Education, but I know oftentimes in your positions, you have to dance to the tune. There is no question about it.

But I just can't get myself to see how President Bush is going to do, as he does when African-American kids in this country of ours under our democracy, if you are poor, be it white or black, you don't have the same access to education as the more affluent kids.

We seem to be moving more and more in that direction. As my colleague here mentioned, this issue of Choice. Privatization of the public school system, which is the direction we seem to be going, is going to diminish, make less and less the opportunity for education for kids who come from families that have very little means.

I just—there is no—I can't help but believe there is a lot of politics involved in this. The show, putting it on the tape, the speech on the tape, what are those tapes going to be used for? Is that going to help kids who are trying to learn how to read; who, they say, their reading scores are low? Is that going to help those who would like to begin to study math and science, and they don't have that opportunity; is that going to help a kid who goes to school where they don't even have the kind of facilities necessary, the kind of computers and numbers in high school that is going to be able to give them—to teach to fit into this society of ours?

These are the kind of things that I think you have to make, if you are going to make school education a priority, as I say it should be. I will agree with you in part when you talk about the defense, and the necessity of defense of our Nation, but one of the best defenses this Nation can ever have is to educate its young and get them equipped to carry on the responsibility of keeping this Nation as is, and I just don't see an interest in this direction on the part of the President, just by his appearance at one school here in Washington, and putting that on tape, writing a letter, as you evidently did, as The New York Times did.

I think on October 4th, you sent letters to all the Nation's 110,000 schools; is that correct?

Secretary ALEXANDER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAYES. And Lord knows, I would like to have you send, you or Senator Hatch, send a letter saying, "We are going to increase the amount of money necessary for Head Start," and not do away with the other programs which have been done in many areas.

And I just don't think this is the direction we should go. I don't think it is going to happen. I think it does give the President some exposure, it is obviously going to help him maybe politically.

These kids can't vote, but their parents can, maybe. I just don't see the sincerity in this kind of move, and the direction that it should be directed. Only one Jesus Christ, I was taught.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Well, thank you, sir. Just a brief comment, if I may, Mr. Chairman, on those points. You mentioned money. We think money is important, too; and no one should think Head Start has gone down.

In fact, since President Bush has been in office, in the 3 years, funding for Head Start for children has gone up 58 percent, and that is something that the President and the Congress have agreed on, and that is a big increase.

In addition, there has been a big new day care program that the President and the Congress have agreed on, a great deal of that

money goes to Head Start-type programs. In North Carolina, for example, they are using that money to extend Head Start to all the 4-year-olds in North Carolina and Oregon, of course, and other States have their own State Head Start programs.

So, we think money is important. You brought up the question of access. We think access is important, and we agree with your point. It is a travesty in America that poor children should not have the same access to schools that people with money have, and so, the easiest way for this committee to help with that is to pass the administration's proposals to give low-income families a choice of public and private schools that people with money now have, and I am glad to hear your support for it—and I am glad to hear you move us off this issue of whether the taxpayers should spend $26,000, so the President could speak to school children about the value of education and is something that is important, which is how shall we give poor families the same kind of choices that people with money have.

And, finally, the idea that talk doesn't make much difference in education defies all of my understanding of education. Most of what we have to do in education has to do with persuading people to do things for themselves, to learn, to conduct themselves right.

As the President was saying to the children, what he was asking them to do was take control of their lives, stay in school, say off drugs, demand that their own school be a violence-free school, work hard on their homework, turn off the television.

Those are all of the issues that educational research tells us and common sense tells us we ought to spend our time being involved in. And the letters from the children of that have come in and from the principals and teachers have acknowledged that they loved the speech; that it made a difference to them.

Ryan McCoy, at Crestview Elementary in Topeka, Kansas, after watching the President, told his local newspaper, "We should pay attention and try to do the best we can in school." I don't think those children will ever forget a message from the President. Of course, it is not all of an education program, but it is hard for me to imagine members of the Education Committee suggesting that it is not a wise investment of the President's time and the taxpayers' money for him to take the time to make that sort of address to school children.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Secretary, you were on such a good roll there that you flipped me off at the turn. Did I hear you say that you think that the administration or your Department has sent us a proposal for legislation to permit children of low-income families to elect to go to private schools and pay for it?

Secretary ALEXANDER. Yes. We have sent you three pieces—we have three proposals before you involving Choice. And one of them has to do——

Chairman FORD. I know about Choice proposals, but what you just said is you wanted to give the families of low-income children money to choose a private school. We don't have anything pending before us that gives the families of low-income children money to go to school.

Now, if you have such legislation, I don't predict much success for it, but we ought to consider it, and if your Department has told

you that we are considering such legislation, you have been badly informed.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Mr. Ford, we have three Choice—three proposals before you to give parents a broader choice of schools. One of them would be grants to local school districts that—to experiment with programs that would give more choices to parents and the money couldn't go to them unless Choice choices also included private schools.

Chairman FORD. Thank you.

Mrs. Roukema?

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I appreciate your statement here today, and I want to echo the words of my colleague, Mr. Coleman, because I think he quite accurately described the situation as trivializing the education agenda. This is the case if we question the validity of the President's visit in terms of the very fine lesson he taught those children the other day.

The President's statement was rhetorical, understandably, but it was an important statement from the leader of our country. The fact that he stood there forthrightly talking to the children was an admirable thing for him to do, and I appreciate your candor in stating it unequivocally.

I do want to, however, get to some of the questions that were addressed in the GAO report that has been alluded to here today by the ranking member, Mr. Goodling, who entered it into the record. I think that those who were listening in the audience today should know some of what was stated in that report, although it was admittedly incomplete, because the legal questions that were addressed seem to be more appropriately addressed to the White House. Indeed, the last paragraph of the report indicates that GAO cannot answer the question of the propriety of the award of the contract by the White House without more data, and indicates that the data, or those responses will be coming from the White House.

But I think it is important for us to note what GAO's letter says about your Department. And in several instances, only one of which I will refer to at this time, it indicates that your Department seemed to have acted completely and consistently within the letter of the law.

For example, the speech itself—and I am quoting now—"and the use of the Department's funds to support it, including the cost of the production contract, appeared to be legal."

And this is the point I wish you, Mr. Secretary, to respond to, if you so choose. The President's speech also does not appear to have violated the restrictions on the use of appropriations for publicity and propaganda, according to page three of the letter.

That is followed by a reference to the Economy Act and that the transfer of funds contained in the interagency agreements between the White House and the Department were proper.

I would just like to give you the opportunity, Mr. Secretary, to address those issues as they have been laid out here from your own Department's perspective.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you very much. I am not going to try to be the General Counsel for the Department.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. I understand.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Because what we would do in this case is make sure before we do it that we are within the laws that you have enacted and the appropriations bills that you have enacted.

I think the short answer to your question would be, we are directed by law to inform the public and to do everything we can to help improve the quality of education, working with students, among others.

We ask specific permission in the Economy Act to transfer funds appropriated to us, which has been done, to other Federal entities for the purpose of carrying out our mission. So, I don't think there is any doubt in the world that it was absolutely appropriate and legal for the Department to help pay for a speech by the President of the United States to American school children about the value of education.

In fact, several people have said, if we weren't doing that, I think we would be legitimately subject to a great deal of criticism for just sitting there and not caring very much.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I do believe that it was important to get your response on the record. There is a clear indication, both from your response, although you are not the legal counsel for the Department, and certainly from the way that GAO has, based on the evidence at hand, exonerated your Department, that there was scrupulous attention to the legalities here. Clearly, this was not a frivolous decision on your part, and I think that it is very important for you to make this point on the record.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you. The legal counsel is here, Mr. Chairman, if you would like to hear from him.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman FORD. I don't think the gentlelady from New Jersey was here when we started this morning, but I started out with a statement pointing out that the GAO was unable, as of now, to give us a GAO report, so there is no GAO report. There was a preliminary letter explaining to me what they were doing, and the next step in that process was the interview that was scheduled for yesterday with legal counsel in the White House, and they were put off by the White House when they arrived for the interview; they were told the legal counsel was on a plane going to California, he is too busy to see him, send us a letter with questions, and we will answer it.

So, when the letter gets answered, the GAO will give us a report, and I stated on the record, before the Secretary started, that I fully expected that that GAO report was going to say that, under the present status of the law, the transfer of education funds to the White House was legal.

I will make the point now in case you missed it earlier today. If the present status of the law makes this kind of a transfer legal, I am going to try to change the law.

And then the gentlelady can choose up sides about how inviolate we want to make money that we fight and shed blood for to get sent to the Education Department, only to have it sent down to supplant the money that we have already sent for communications to the White House.

I would feel the same as if it was being used over here for any member of this committee. That is the question, not whether it is legal. I never have suggested at any stage that it was illegal; I just suggest that it is improper, that it is not good sense.

The Secretary and I disagree on that. I see consistently, everybody on this side of the aisle is agreeing with the Secretary, that diverting funds from education to hire an outside contractor to produce a film is a proper diversion of those funds.

I have no question that we are going to get an opinion that says there was no law broken, there was nobody going to jail, nobody is going to be compelled to pay back the money. I am considering two things.

I just asked Mr. Petri if he would support me when the appropriate authorization bill comes up with an amendment to pay back the Department of Education, $26,750 from the communications account in the White House where the money should have come from in the first place.

The other way to do it, and I have already had some conversation with members of both parties on the Appropriations Committee, is tighter language to indicate that neither the Department or any other department can willy-nilly change the purpose, as Congress perceives it, when it appropriates the money to a different purpose because it somehow generally fits the vision of the people in the Department of what their mission is.

I don't agree, Mrs. Roukema, with the Secretary. I don't suggest that the Secretary is acting with the slightest scintilla of bad faith in this matter. I don't accuse anybody of anything. I just suggest that it is bad judgment exercised by somebody along the line and I would like to see it changed.

Now that is where we are.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Chairman——

Chairman FORD. Nobody is accusing the Department of doing anything illegal.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Chairman, I understand that, and there was no inference in my statement that you or any individual member of this committee was alleging illegal conduct.

I made it clear that in my judgment and the judgment of the Secretary, that the President's appearance was positive and appropriate. I used that word "judgment," and it is subjective here. There is no question about that.

However, that has been an underlying implication all along, as evidenced by the fact that we have asked for a GAO study as to whether or not there were any illegal improprieties. It is, therefore, not only appropriate, it is incumbent upon us to get on the record, not only GAO's letter but also some of the statements articulated from GAO's letter, and I see nothing wrong with that.

I think indeed that we would be derelict in our duty—in fact, prejudicial, if we had not given the Secretary the opportunity to respond in specific—to the specific statements in the GAO letter.

Also, I hope you were listening, when I alluded to the fact that these questions are more appropriately addressed to the White House and that, according to GAO's letter, the White House will be giving us a report.

So I don't see that you and I have any disagreement here, except to the degree that we judge whether it is appropriate for the President of the United States to tell school children, even under these circumstances, in a live broadcast that they ought to stay in school and not use drugs.

That is a judgment call as to whether or not that is a proper expenditure of funds; I recognize that. But I don't want you to think that in any way I was questioning your intentions here. I think it is perfectly legitimate for a wide disagreement on the judgment of who is trivializing education.

When we get down to the question of how funds can be used, that is another question. But clearly the GAO letter addressed itself to the legalities, and I thought the Secretary should have the opportunity to respond.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Chairman FORD. Mr. Sawyer.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and then thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here today.

I think it is important to go back to the statements that the Chairman made at the beginning. I recall vividly the morning that we came in here, and the Chairman turned to me and asked me whether I had seen the morning paper, and I hadn't.

It wasn't our chairman, it wasn't this committee, it was a newspaper report of the use of those funds that raised and called into question the subject that we discuss here today.

And so in that sense, I don't think any of us are here to trivialize education, nor do I think that the President's message trivialized education, nor do I think that the questions that we raise today trivializes education. What we are talking about is symbol and substance.

The Chairman just discussed in some detail the sense some of us had about the use of Department funds versus the use of White House funds, but none of that is to suggest that the message of the President was not important.

It is important to all of us; it is important to every school child across the Nation; it may be more important to the parents of those school children who need to reinforce that message day in and day out.

It occurs to me that if members of this committee whose mission and purpose and commitment to education is every bit as strong as yours, and as the President's, were to use official funds, that that use of funds would be called into question just as one newspaper and others did the use of Department of Education funds a few weeks ago.

I am not here to question whether it is legal. It might be allowable; it might not. It surely would be questioned if we were to do that.

It is as important that we communicate that. And if I do anything in closing, Mr. Secretary, it is to thank you for being here today so that we, all of us, can demonstrate that common commitment to education in this country.

It is every bit as fundamental to our leadership in the next century as it has been in defining American leadership in this country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Sawyer. I appreciate your comments. This committee has before it, as soon as it finishes talking about whether it is appropriate for the President of the United States to address the school children of America and for the Department of Education to help buy the cameras for that time, a great amount of very important education legislation that will help transform this country's education system that could help children and about whether there is a good amount of bipartisan agreement.

And I don't want to say anything or do anything here today that would make that more difficult to achieve. But one of the things I don't want to come out of this is, I don't want this sort of discussion in any way to make more difficult for me to get the President of the United States to go speak to school children about education. He should be doing that.

And we don't send smoke signals anymore. We don't send messages by telegraph or wireless. We use a microphone and a camera. Those are the bully pulpits. And I wouldn't want anything to be said here today that would make any of you think twice about walking onto the House floor where you have your own production facilities which you pay for—it comes out of there just like you want it, and make a one-minute speech about the value of education or go down to your own House recording studio.

I wish all of you would do that, and I wish you would take the video of what the President said and take it back to your District and give it to people.

And your law specifically authorizes our Department to transfer funds to any other department that can help us carry out our mission. So I don't want to slow any of you down in using your bully pulpits, because Congressmen have bully pulpits, too, and I hope you and the President both use them in exactly the way the President did.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Secretary, I raise only the question that if we were to do precisely that, that the use of those funds in that way would be called into question.

Secretary ALEXANDER. If you went to the House Recording Studio and made a video about education and sent it back to your district?

Mr. SAWYER. And used it in precisely the same way with outside production companies, we would be called into deep question. I am not suggesting that we ought to do that.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Mr. Sawyer, you have an outside production company, it is called the House Recording Studio, which spends $1 million a year.

Mr. SAWYER. I beg to differ with you. If we were to go out and hire an outside contractor that would be called campaigning. I am not trying to call into question the judgment that was used in this.

The question is whether the same standards of judgment are being used in terms of evaluating the importance and the means of delivering exactly the same message.

I am not—I didn't come here to raise a matter of difference; I came here to suggest that in this Member's view, that your motive was sound; only that this has been called into question by others. We are familiar with how that works. We are called into question absolutely every day for efforts of this kind.

I wish that we could simply get on to exactly what you are talking about; perhaps with as much attention as these proceedings are raising, as each of us works to find that common grounds on the legislation that is going to follow us immediately after these proceedings are done.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Whether you ought to let one story in a newspaper set an agenda of this many important people is a pretty good question.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Secretary, I apparently am only angering you, and I apologize for that, that has not been my purpose. I just simply think that the message, whether it comes from the President or from Members of Congress, is equally important, and that the best thing that we can do from this point forward is to demonstrate the teamwork that ought to be a part of that common effort.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Gunderson.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome, and based on the first discussion, I would hope that we would quickly pass a resolution in this committee asking the appropriation conferees who are meeting today on your funding bill for fiscal year 1992 that they include funding for a recording studio at the Department of Education so that next time you won't have to contract out for this.

You know, the Chairman of this committee and I are sometimes friendly partners in behalf of education, and those who have watched us over the years have seen that sometimes we are friendly combatants in the area of political, philosophical differences.

This is one of those times. Although I have to say I agree with what the Chairman said in his opening remarks when he expressed the feeling of sadness that this had to occur. Because, frankly, I am sad; I am disappointed, and I am embarrassed that this committee is using this amount of time on such a trivial issue.

The fact is we are acting like a bunch of children who are frustrated and jealous that the President has gotten more publicity in the area of education than we ourselves, and I think we all ought to be bigger than that.

I think we ought to take a look at exactly what we have before us, and the fact is that we are talking about one-tenth of 1 percent of the entire Department of Education fiscal year 1991 appropriation for the President to speak to 110,000 schools.

We spent the decade of the 1980s in this committee criticizing the previous administration for its benign neglect of education, and now that we have a President and a Secretary of Education that are providing attention, commitment and leadership in this area, we gather to criticize them for the use of public funds.

I would suggest to anyone on this committee that if we are as concerned about spending public dollars to teach children as our statements this morning would suggest, that perhaps this committee could lead the way by eliminating the over $100,000 we spend annually for press and public affairs officials on this committee and donate that $100,000 to Chapter 1.

You know, it is exactly the actions of this committee today that are why the American people are enjoying Congress bashing. Because we spend $39,000 on a new carpet for the Members' dining

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room and then we convene a 2 hour hearing to criticize the President of the United States for spending 60 percent of that to speak to 110,000 schools.

We ought to be embarrassed for this kind of conduct. If it were not for the fact that as soon as this part of the hearing is going to be concluded we will move on to a bipartisan effort for educational reform, I would have moved to adjourn this hearing at the beginning, because we don't look good when we practice this kind of action while America's children are waiting for us to do something real about education.

Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. [presiding] Mr. Payne?

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

I too wish that we could get this much attention to the deliberations that we have been doing in the past few weeks. But I personally thing that it is good for the President to speak out. I think that it is good for him to certainly emphasize education, to tell kids to stay in school and work hard, because he is very persuasive.

We have seen that very, very vividly in the last three or four days. The fact that—and you mention the nice note you received from a youngster from Topeka reminding me of the 1954 Supreme Court decision, because it was the Board of Education of Topeka versus Brown or just reversed, and in that it said that separate but equal was unconstitutional. But therefore, going back to 1896, it said separate but equal was constitutional.

Governor Kerner, in his commission report in the late 1960s, said that we have two societies, one equal, certainly unequal, one black, one white, one rich, one poor, but definitely unequal. And then I think that I say all that to say that when Representative Hayes talked about the need for inner city schools to be improved, you said well, you are right. And we got the answer.

What is the answer? Choice. Why? Because a poor kid from inner city Chicago can get out to suburban—the county there in Chicago to go to another school district, and therefore, he has choice. That parent could certainly get that kind maybe to some private school somewhere down the road.

But when we look at the Kerner commission report, when we look at 1896, separate but equal, we haven't even reached separate but equal, and I say all that to say that it is like a city not really enforcing its codes of housing.

You say, well, if you have a house that is disrepair and falling down, just simply move, go and move to a better house, rather than thinking about what can we do to have endorsement to prevent the house that has deteriorated from falling down?

And that is why I have a problem with this whole question of choice. The simple thing is to say well—they talked about it, a lot of people talked about it, why don't you simply let those few parents have enough initiative to go and just pick any private, parochial, public school, wherever. That all sounds great.

But why do we abandon the basic problem of seeing what we can do to correct the schools that are not working? What are we going to do about the inequity, the inequities in funding as Governor Florio tried to do in New Jersey. He said from the 150 richest dis-

tricts, he said, let's roll the money into the lower ones, and it went nowhere.

So my point is that this question of choice is not really dealing with the issue. The issue is that you have got school, and I think Jonathan Kozol from the book of "American School, Savage Inequities" said that, for example, there is a school district right in New Jersey, one pays $7,300 per pupil per year, the other in Camden pays $3,500 per year.

Now when we go through testing, we have national testing. When we have this program, we know that the kids in Princeton at the $7,300 a year school are certainly going to probably score twice as high as those kids at the $3,500 Camden school.

So to get back to the persuasiveness, why don't we use the persuasion to talk about how we can make all schools better. Why have people abandoned those schools that need help and let them, I guess, die, rather than to try to improve or correct it.

So I think that choice is definitely not the way to go. One or two might escape out. How does a kid from downtown inner city Newark get up to Montclair every morning? It is impractical; it makes no sense, because the basic problems of those people who are entrapped in poverty simply does not mitigate to them going to finding a way to get a kid up to some school and get them back.

And so I just simply say that to say that when Representative Hayes said that he felt that this choice was not the way to go and you said, oh, no, as a matter of fact, you turned his speaking around to say that he therefore supports the Choice system. Sure.

I think that what we need to do, as I said, and I will conclude, is that we need to see how we can improve the quality of education, rather than to use some words, buzz words that make it appear as though that is the salvation of the system.

It isn't; and I think that we are really running from the basic issue of inequity, separate and unequal schools, and we are not really dealing with the basic problem of education in this country in my opinion.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Mr. Chairman, I know that you have a lot of important work before you, and I would, you know, I would enjoy discussing these issues; I don't want to show any lack of respect for Mr. Payne's comments. But if you would like for me to, I will be extremely brief in my remarks so that you can go on through the other members of the committee and get on to other things.

I appreciate what you are saying. The only summary I would make would be, number one, in Memphis, I know where, for the last 10 years, have been expanding the choice of schools. They were able, working together with the NAACP and the Federal court, to expand Choice for all children.

It actually reduced the amount of across-town bussing and they saved the money, put it into academic programs, drew more people back into the public schools, and transported every child who had a transportation problem.

And of course a poor mother who might be making $10,000 a year does have a choice of colleges that she might go to or a technical institute she might go to to get a better job, she has a choice of

day care centers using Federal money and we think she might have the broader choice.

Mr. KILDEE. The Chair will rotate back and forth between Democrats and Republicans, will also attempt to call on Members in their order of arrival.

Mr. Armey?

Mr. ARMEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, as an economist who enjoyed public choice theory, this is a fascinating debate for me to be able to participate with you because yesterday Ronald Coase, one of our leaders in public choice theory, just got a Nobel Award for economics.

So I would like to put this in a bit of perspective. The Chairman raised a fascinating public choice question which was what is the propriety of using public funds for what may be a political purpose.

One also has to ask the question, is it possible for people in public office to use public funds and there not be a political side effect?

The first axiom of politics taught to me by my first political consultant was that good policy makes good politics.

In fact, the President proved that on October 1 with that very inspiring speech to our Nation's young people to tell them yes, you are important; yes, we care; yes, we want the best for you.

It did, in fact, end up being good politics, as well as good policy, and that, of course, is what is so annoying the Democrats in Congress.

But there is another question I would like to address. Is it possible that bad policy might make good politics? And to get some insight into that question, I would like to look at the behavior of this committee.

This committee has held 18 field hearings across this country so far this year at a total cost of $32,840.71, most of that cost being for travel expenses for Members of Congress and staff.

Now, a field hearing may or may not contribute insight and understanding into the policy agenda under consideration, but it is clear that it is good politics.

Let me just take a moment to read where these hearings were held: Flint, Michigan; Kansas City, Missouri; New York City; Vancouver, Washington; Akron, Ohio; Pleasant Hill, California; Ann Arbor, Michigan; New Brunswick, New Jersey; New York, New York; Raleigh, North Carolina; Hilo, Hawaii; Great Falls, Montana; Madison, Wisconsin; Houston, Texas; South Bend, Indiana; New Orleans, Louisiana; Los Angeles, California; each of these States having, of course, critical education concerns as every site in America does, but having something in addition to that which attracted this committee to that particular site, which is a Member of this committee representing that site.

I will tell you that field hearings are political dog and pony shows on behalf of the committee member in whose district the hearing is held. That is 32,840 additional dollars which could have paid for unemployment benefits or student tuition fees.

Now another example of bad policy being good politics, which I was amazed at occurred in 1988. Nobody on this committee objected to the fact that the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Perkins, brought a technical crew to this chamber during a committee mark

up on the minimum wage bill, and they positioned their camera immediately in front of him and filmed his campaign commercial. In it he offered in the most eloquent language I have heard him use in this committee, an amendment to raise the minimum wage to $5.

And it certainly must have been good politics because the committee took the bait. They voted for a $4 increase in the minimum wage, and it became necessary for the committee later in conference to get it back to the amount the committee really had intended.

And nobody in this committee had one bit of concern about using this committee's time or the resources of this committee to make that campaign commercial.

So I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, another lesson, this time not from a famous economist, Ronald Coase, but from a famous Texas personality, Jerry Jeff Walker, who had a wonderful song entitled The Pot Cannot Call the Kettle Black.

I thank you for your forebearance with this committee.

Thank you.

Mr. PERKINS. Mr. Chairman, could I just interject here, since my name has been used.

Mr. KILDEE. [presiding] The Chair will announce for the sake of both the Secretary's schedule and the agenda of this committee that the Chair will now invoke, beginning on the Democratic side, the 5 minute rule.

So I think that is fair to everybody, and Mrs. Unsoeld is the next one.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Wait a minute. You said Mr. Martinez after Mr. Payne.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Perkins, do you want to do that now?

Mr. PERKINS. He's quite incorrect, though; I think it would have been a wonderful idea. And I am quite frankly sorry that I didn't get in here to talk about the idea that we should have workers paid in America more than they presently are and that the amount that we are presently paying them under the present minimum wage is insufficient.

I quite agree with that statement. And next time we have such a thing, I will try to make sure that we do indeed have a camera crew here so that we can talk about your side of the issue.

And I thank the distinguished gentleman.

Mr. KILDEE. Mrs. Unsoeld.

Mrs. UNSOELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thought that the contents of the President's speech were very good. But now rather than to hundreds of thousands of school kids, I would like his next speech to be to the millions of people of this country.

And I would like to have him say that because, and quoting from your written statement, because "the best education system in the world is more important to our Nation's future than having the strongest system of industrial production or even the strongest military," that the President would go before the millions of people of this country and urge them to back an additional revenue source to pay for such an education program or the transfer from savings in the military to pay for it.

That would be a terrific speech.

Thank you.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Thank you.

I think I should only say one thing. I would love for the television networks to deem a speech on education of equal importance to a speech on defense, and I agree for once to carry it when the President makes it, which so far they haven't done.

And second, I think the President will do that, although most of the funding will come from State and local governments.

Education funding has increased most rapidly there. We now spend about $400 billion on education, about $300 billion on national defense. Most of the defense, of course, comes from there; and most of the education comes from there.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Fawell?

Mr. FAWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I sit here in wonderment because Mr. Secretary, your comments, I think, are absolutely appropriate.

The issue here is whether or not what was done is good for education, is appropriate for the Department, and appropriate for the President.

And I almost feel that no one has to say anything more than that. It seems to me so self-evident that to utilize what we call the bully pulpit of the presidency is good. I think we can go back to a Nation at risk. And, in so many other ways, the Federal Government has to a great degree changed attitudes and made suggestions.

I think that what was done was so very, very appropriate. I guess Shakespeare said evil is in the eye of the beholder; and so is politics.

The Chairman is a very articulate and capable man. He said it was tainted by White House operatives. There were munchkins talking to munchkins. It is propaganda. It is politics. This just wows me when I hear things like this.

We ought not to be spending our time, and you should not have to be coming up to Capitol Hill to engage in something like this. And then we talk about what the $26,000 spent, my God, what that has done to the budget, how terrible.

Last week I suggested on the floor of the House that we take $250 million that is being taken from the General Fund and being utilized for demonstration projects back home for the benefit of many, many Members of this Congress; and you would think I was suggesting that a crime be perpetrated.

And we stole from the General Fund, even though we have coming up next week $6 to $7 billion of entitlement pork in demonstration projects.

Now how can this Congress spend our time on something like this. And I will agree with the Chairman in only one area, as Mr. Gunderson said, when he said he's saddened by this hearing.

I rest my case with what I have said. But I appreciate very much your coming up here, and I hope you don't have to be dragged up here again—not dragged, you came willingly, to your credit, and have to go through this again.

And I hope the people that view this, this particular appropriation, I guess there is a lesson for all of us to learn here. And I

think I know what 90 percent of the people who see it, the kinds of conclusions they will draw.

That is all I have to say. And again, thank you for being here.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Serrano?

Mr. SERRANO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, like so many other people, am not going to get involved in the issue of what is legal and what is illegal. I leave that to people who are lawyers, I am not one.

I am concerned about the message that the administration and the Department is trying to get across to the American people and to children everywhere.

And with that in mind, I have done—I have done very little research, but the information I have is that the Alice Deal School is not your typical district school.

In fact, it wouldn't be considered your typical urban school suffering the pains and the difficulties that most urban schools experience.

We know that we live in a society where there are numbers, large numbers of schools in districts throughout this country that are doing well.

And there are schools throughout this country that are not doing well, children in those areas, in many cases are forgotten.

When we speak about a better education for your children, certainly I am speaking about two things: Maintaining the quality, the good quality we have in some places and improving on it; and then trying to do something about the embarrassing situation of children in areas like the South Bronx who, in many ways can be compared to children in developing nations or in Third World nations in terms of how they live.

I am very concerned about the message that the Department is trying to bring across. Is it a message that states, we have serious problems and this is what we intend to do; or is it a message that says, most of this Nation is doing well?

With that in mind, I would like to ask you, Mr. Secretary, how this school was selected, whether it was done by the President, the administration, or your department?

Secondly, why you discounted or did you at all ever consider a school, for instance, in my district where a class is held in a closet rather than a classroom; a school in my district where a class is held on the stairways, on the up stairway, having moved from last year's down staircase; a school where you could find a leaky roof right over the blackboard and the teacher having to spend half her day as a janitor and the other half as a teacher.

It would seem to me that that would be a more direct statement about the conditions of schools and education for many children in this country.

And so my question to you is how was this school selected and what would have been the problem with putting on tape, on TV to the media this kind of a situation that I have in the poorest congressional district in the Nation, and that Mr. Hayes has in the other poorest congressional district in the Nation, and not the kinds of schools that we seem to think when we see on TV exists throughout this country?

Secretary ALEXANDER. Well, thank you for the question. I guess that is just a judgment question. If we were to televise what was going on in Congress, for example, we could make a decision to find something that was unflattering and talk about it.

Mr. SERRANO. That is always done.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Or we could try to focus on, as many Members were talking about, the hard work that goes on here, the late nights that are spent here, the constituent calls that are returned, the people that are helped.

We are very much aware that there are children growing up very much at risk. A lot of those children go to Alice Deal School.

I was there at that school. That is not a school for only children of great advantage. It is a public school. It is here in the District of Columbia, but it is a good school.

And what we like to do whenever we are talking about education if we can is to catch teachers and parents and students doing things right instead of catching them doing things wrong.

So if the President is going to go to a school and talk to school children about taking control of their lives and staying in school and keeping violence out of the school and drugs out of the school, I think it is good for him to pick a school that is working hard and trying to do well.

I don't think there is one single public school in the District of Columbia that doesn't have its share of problems, that doesn't have a large number of the students there from families who are poor, who need reduced lunches or free lunches; and that would be true at Alice Deal, too.

So I think it was a good choice. The President has been, I think, to 38 different schools at least. He has done a variety of things. Often we go to a variety of different places.

But we are not trying to put people down; we are trying to lift people up. So we thought it would be good to select a public school in the District nearby that would reduce the expense of going out of town and show a good school, one that is doing things right, pat the teacher on the back, encourage the students, set a good example. Sometimes that helps.

Mr. SERRANO. Well, Mr. Secretary, I don't want to take too much time, because I know my colleagues also want to have an opportunity to speak to you and ask you some questions.

But let me just say that the reason I mention the word "message" is because while on one hand I expect and even understand your desire to put the best side for public view, I think in terms of sending a message to students, the Department, I am not going to speak to the President now because that is his decision.

The Department could send a stronger message if he, the President, said to children who are at risk or in the process of failing, I am here in your environment, and I am telling you that even in this environment, we can succeed. And I, as your President, am telling you that even here with this leaky roof top, we are committed to turning this situation around.

Now, there is an importance in saying I did this and I did that and this is the best that we have got. We know that. But I think what is going to bring us down as a Nation, if education is what brings us down, is not schools like Alice Deal.

It is a PS whatever, and out of respect for them, I won't mention them in my district because they are hurting enough without me mentioning them over and over.

But they are not hurt if they have the President visit them and say there is a commitment in this country that I am going to lead to turn this roof around, to turn this closet around, to turn this teaching in a bathroom around, because that cannot be tolerated in this country.

And so in conclusion, I understand what he was trying to do. I understand what the Department is trying to do. I do it a lot myself. I speak at a lot of schools.

I guess the difference between the President and I, besides a million other reasons, is that he can choose an Alice Deal school; I cannot find one in my district.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Well, I will not prolong this except to say that if the principal of Alice Deal school or Mayor Dixon or anybody else who knows as much about that school are watching, they would be getting in line to come down here and remind you and me that there are many children in that school who are at risk; that it is a public school in the District of Columbia; that there are a great many problems there that are in your district or in urban areas.

This is a country that grew up reading the Little Engine That Could. We could go around asking kids to read the Little Engine That Couldn't and remind them of how hard things are.

We want to be honest about how hard things are, but we also want to call attention to schools, especially public schools in big cities like the District of Columbia, that are in the midst of problems, finding a way to succeed.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Henry.

Mr. HENRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome. I am pleased you are here. This is truly an historic committee meeting.

And rather than suggest that the media shouldn't be here, I think it is fully appropriate that they are. I am pleased that we have CNN and some of the networks. I trust we have the Washington Post, the New York Times, because this is an historic event.

In fact, one of the reasons I am here and made an effort to be here with many others as well is never before in the 203 years of this Congress has a hearing been held on a more trivial matter.

And you were honored, of course, to be a participant in this charade. We have in the House of Representatives not only our own internal recording and broadcast capacities, we have what is called the Office of House Historian.

And a senior staff member is the official historian of the House of Representatives, Dr. Raymond Smock, and I have made a formal request to Dr. Smock to see if he can document in the 203 year history of this institution any hearing which was more trivial or blatantly politically motivated than that which we are experiencing today.

Unfortunately, his research is not yet complete, and I have not yet received a written response from the historian's office.

It is right that the media is covering it, and I hope they do because I think the public can see through this sham.

You talk about $26,000 was expended to get the lighting, the technical support and the broadcast and the relay to reach 110,000 school buildings in America on what is the critical domestic issue facing this country, even more than health care.

In fact, over 70 percent of the American public says that this Nation needs fundamental reform and restructuring of its educational system.

That is a higher percentage than would agree to the statement relative to health care as serious as the health care delivery crisis and cost containment issues are in this country.

This country faces 800,000 high school dropouts a year. Of the high school graduates each year, 800,000 are deemed to be functionally illiterate. This Nation is the last of the 16 industrialized nations in the competency of its graduates in math and science.

When we deal with violence and drugs, a young person of school age is more likely to be victimized by violence on the school grounds than of the school grounds in his or her lifetime.

Spending for K–12 education on a per capita fully inflationary adjusted basis has increased 30 years—30 percent, 30 percent in the last 10 years, while outputs in achievement have been in decline.

I want to commend the President for forcing the issue. I want to commend you, Mr. Secretary, for forcing the issue. And I want to thank the media for being here, because I think the public is smart enough to see through this for what it is.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman FORD. Mr. Andrews.

Mr. ANDREWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being with us this morning. Mr. Secretary, your reputation on both sides of the aisle is that you are a person of good faith and integrity and great talent, and I think that your justification of this this morning has done nothing to detract from that.

And I thank you for the comments that you have offered. I also think there is a concensus on both sides of the aisle that if educational policy was a matter of a partnership between this committee and you and your Department with a minor supporting role from the committee from the other body, the country would be well served.

I do want to examine a little bit about how this decision was made, though, because some of us have some concerns about the extent to which educational policy is being driven by you in the administration and to what extent it is being driven by some others, or maybe driven by some others.

Whose idea was it to have the President give the speech?

Secretary ALEXANDER. I would like to say it was mine. I think it was the idea of a lot of people. We have concluded that changing attitudes is the most important thing we have to do, and we look for ways to communicate attitudes about—to cause people to see the size of the skills and knowledge gap, to see how archaic the schools are, to see how the children are growing up differently, to see that adults need to go back to school.

So we are constantly thinking of ways to do that. The most obvious communicator is the President of the United States, which is the major value of his trying to be the education President.

I remember one full discussion of exactly this subject, and, in fact, I brought my notes this morning about exactly what could the President do to try to increase the level of interest in education, to lead a crusade.

And this was conducted on July the 29th of this year by the President's Education Advisory Committee, which includes the president of the National PTA, the president of the NEA, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, and there were eight or ten suggestions about what the President himself might do.

He might teach a class. He might give a back-to-school message, was what Senator Bacchus said, who was there.

And then the president of the National PTA, Ann Lynch, said, well, that would be a good idea, just remember that when he does the back-to-school message, that some schools go year round.

And then the group of educators and citizens and others began to talk about what he might say.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Secretary, if I might interrupt.

Secretary ALEXANDER. I am just trying to answer your question.

Mr. ANDREWS. You said it may have been your idea. Whose was it?

Secretary ALEXANDER. There were 20 to 25 most distinguished colleagues and business leaders in America convened there, and they were all talking about it suggesting what he might say, talk about learning for the sake of learning when he did, he might talk about understanding and knowing how to use information.

So the idea, I would say, came from a large variety of people. I wish I could take full credit for it.

Roger Porter at the White House was also in that meeting. I would like to claim it was my idea, but I think there were a lot of people who——

Mr. ANDREWS. Did the decision to expend or transfer the Department funds originate with the Department or the White House?

Secretary ALEXANDER. I think the White House asked for that, but we discussed how we would—when he came to a conclusion to do this, we took the idea of the White House.

After the meeting of the President's Advisory Commission, I remember I went to a meeting and talked to several people at the White House that wanted the President to do this.

We all agreed that it would be one of the best things he could do. And when we agreed to make the recommendation, we basically asked the White House to take care of arranging for the President to do it.

We would take care of getting the President to the schools, and if I am not mistaken, the White House then requested that we transfer the money, because—and I can give you the reason why.

Because we had asked CNN if they would cover it and they said they would and only for themselves.

Mr. ANDREWS. They are alike, we understand.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Most schools aren't hooked up to CNN, so we asked PBS then if they would also do it, and CNN said if they both do it, we won't pay for the production costs.

So it would have been like making a telephone call without a telephone.

So we paid for the telephone.

Mr. ANDREWS. Do you know who authorized the decision or requested the money be transferred?

Secretary ALEXANDER. I do not.

Mr. ANDREWS. The reason I ask these questions, I take it, and I think the committee takes, the absolute face value your assurances the principle reasons you have given for this speech are, in fact legislation, yes.

Secretary ALEXANDER. Yes.

Mr. ANDREWS. No question about that.

I am concerned when I read a statement like this, and I hope you would join us in trying to get assurances this statement doesn't come to pass.

This is from The New York Times of October 6, and is an article by Gwen Ifil from The New York Times talking about this issue.

Let me read from it for a moment and then ask if you would enlist with us in preventing the result.

It is talking about the visit in which the President talked to school children who had been advised to wear soft-soled shoes that would not make distracting noise.

This was taped by a private production firm paid with $26,750 in Federal funds.

The visit of the broadcast live by CNN and Public Broadcasting Service stations and the tape was made available to other networks.

Presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said the event was not electioneering, but he also said the White House would not hesitate to use the footage for political purposes if it was deemed effective.

I hope that you would join us in encouraging him not to do that.

Secretary ALEXANDER. I would be glad to do that.

In fact, I did that that same day and, in fact, I later wrote Mr. Ford a letter.

There was never any discussion of this being a political event.

This was not a speech to kids. It was not a speech about policy. It was a speech about them and their responsibilities.

I almost wish now we had shown the film so you could see it here.

It was a terrific thing, and I can assure you that it wasn't done for a political purpose and there is nothing that we have that will be sent to the Department of Education, for any campaign.

The only campaign committee that has it now is the Democratic National Committee, because the Congressman said he sent it to them.

Mr. ANDREWS. Would you join in a letter to the White House official to commit that in writing?

Secretary ALEXANDER. No, I won't do that.

I mean, what I will do is that I will assure you that if anybody tries to use that in a campaign film, that I will encourage them not to do that, but that would be like you joining in a letter asking everybody in the country never to use one of your televised spots from the House Floor, the House production studio, in any form.

That becomes a matter of the public domain, and the Democratic National Committee can use it, some independent action committee can use it, anybody can use it.

We would hope schools all over America would use it. We would like for you and members of the committee to send to the schools in your district copies of the President's speech, but I hardly know how to respond to this.

I mean, here we are, this hearing has already cost more than $26,000 this morning.

It has gone on longer than the President's speech to the school children and it has attracted more network coverage than that speech did.

I hardly know how to respond to this. I thought what I was supposed to be doing was to get the President of the United States to talk about the value of education and the law specifically says and the GAO's letter says the same thing, it was perfectly appropriate for us to transfer money from one Department to another in support of our mission.

We transfer money from Department to Members of Congress in support of our mission.

So what I really wish, you all have some terrifically important legislation before you this morning that will really help American children.

You are working on it in a bipartisan way, and I guess I should be quiet. Maybe you would get on to a little more rapidly.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Secretary, thank you and I mean to cast no doubts upon our confidence in your ability to do the right thing.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Chairman, can I have one quick shot?

Mr. Secretary, I will mention again that you approached several Members and asked us to entice some of the school systems back home to become America 2000 communities.

I have five communities of very dedicated people wanting to upgrade their system wanting to compete with each other and create a new generation of American schools.

As a businessman, I know when you are trying to sell a product, in this case education, you use the best salesman you have. The best salesman we have is the President of the United States.

I think it was great that you came up with the program, and if there is any real difficulty about the $26,000, I will be glad to write you a check, if you will hold it for a couple of days, until I can cover it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman FORD. We have a vote.

It must be important because it is offered by Mr. Dannemeyer.

I can get over there and vote against it quick, but the Secretary has accommodated us by coming early, staying late, has to be someplace at 11:30.

That was understood from the beginning.

I would apologize to the Members who haven't had an opportunity to ask their questions in person and simply suggest, I know the Secretary would be perfectly willing to respond to you if you address any questions that are left in your mind to him through the Chair.

We will send them over to him and we will get an answer for you and it will be printed in the record contemporaneous with these proceedings.

If you have opening statements that would be in, I would ask unanimous consent that all members have permission to insert a statement in the record that will appear contemporaneous with these proceedings.

[The prepared statement of Hon. John A. Boehner follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OHIO

Mr. Chairman, I must commend you for calling this hearing and giving Secretary Alexander an opportunity to tell this committee about the success of the recent classroom visit by President Bush. I also must commend Secretary Alexander and his assistants for using ingenuity and independent judgment to attempt something new and innovative.

In evaluating and analyzing this different approach to education, I believe Secretary Alexander and Mr. Kearns may have come across something that works—having the President directly address the children of this Nation. It is after all, President Bush that is one of the most recognized individuals to children. In fact, when we consider that the others who are readily recognized by our children are people such as Axl Rose of the rock group Guns and Roses, and cartoon characters such as Bart Simpson and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, we should be thankful that the President is willing to go on TV for the sole purpose of teaching our young. For our children are very impressionable, and an individual such as President Bush can impress upon our young that hard work, self-reliance and getting a quality education do pay off.

I knew that I could not come to this hearing well-informed without speaking with some people back home. I spoke with principals and teachers who watched the program with their students, and received an enthusiastic response. In fact, several principals told me about their students who watched this program and their response was as equally enthusiastic.

Mr. Chairman, after reviewing the program, and the correspondence from my district, I must say that this television program was innovative, a proper use of Department funds and should be considered again in the future.

Chairman FORD. With that, Mr. Secretary, I want to thank you for your cooperation. I reiterate on the record that I couldn't be more in disagreement with your vision of propriety of this activity, but I do not in any way at all say that in an accusatory tone nor suggest that you don't really believe what you are saying to us, I just happen to think, Mr. Secretary, you are wrong, and I think two people who got you into this are not here today.

If they are not identified to me.

I think it was the kind of people who were thinking and talking like Marlin Fitzwater who got this thing kicked off into the press and caused a fire storm.

I agree with the gentlelady from New Jersey who perceived, at least her among the other people here, that the purpose of this hearing was a worthy purpose, to give you an opportunity to do exactly what you have done here, to indicate that you acted then in good faith and you intend to continue to act in what you believe to be the best interest of education.

It should be made clear to everybody we have a disagreement about how to go about it, but we still agree that you are basically trying to do the right thing.

With that, I will excuse the Secretary and ask the committee to come back after the vote at 11:30 to finish marking up H.R. 3320.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the committee recessed, to reconvene pursuant to other business.]

[Additional material submitted for the record follows.]

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November 14, 1991

Honorable Lamar Alexander
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

At the hearing the Education and Labor Committee conducted on the use of Department funds to produce a video of a speech given by President Bush, several Members did not have an opportunity to ask you questions. I have enclosed some questions for your response and would appreciate receiving your reply for the hearing record by November 27.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

WILLIAM D. FORD
Chairman

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

December 19, 1991

Honorable William D. Ford
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Alexander requesting that he respond to questions regarding the School Recognition Program. The Secretary has provided answers to these questions. I understand they will be included as part of the hearing record for the October 17 hearing on the Department's use of funds to help produce a video of the President's speech to the nation's schoolchildren from Alice Deal Junior High School.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance on this issue.

Sincerely,

B. Robert Okun
Assistant Secretary

Attachment

400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-3100

RESPONSE TO WILLIAM D. FORD'S NOVEMBER 14, 1991, LETTER REGARDING THE SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Relevant Background Information on Program Operations:

- o No grants are awarded under the Blue Ribbon Schools Program; the value of the program to schools is not only that they get public recognition for their achievements but that the collaborative self-analysis required to complete the program's nomination form helps schools understand their strengths and areas in need of improvement and builds an esprit de corps that leads to a commitment to continue to strive for educational excellence.

- o A number of factors influence how well schools from a given State fare in the Blue Ribbon Schools Program in any year.

  - The program relies on persons in each State education agency designated by the Chief State School Officer to disseminate information about the program to public schools, to assist interested schools in completing the application process, and to conduct a review of nominations to send up-to-the-established quota for that State to the U.S. Department of Education. The amount of effort State staff give to these activities can have considerable influence on the success rate of schools in a given cycle.

  - Public school quotas are established for each State based on the population in the State. More specifically, these quotas currently represent 75% of the size of the entire State Congressional delegation, with a floor of three for smaller States. (An overall quota for private schools is established for the Council for American Private Education (CAPE), which performs functions similar to those of State liaisons.) If States perform effectively, they generate many nominations from which to choose the very best to send to Washington, D.C. If they provide limited information and assistance, fewer schools participate, resulting in a State's submitting weaker applications or not meeting the State quota.

- It has been the goal of the program from the beginning to identify a group of exemplary schools that represent the diversity of American education. Schools are judged not against some absolute model but on how well they are serving their own student populations with the resources available.

- Once public and private schools are nominated to the Department of Education, a national panel reviews the nominations. The panel consists of some 100 outstanding public and private school educators, college and university staffs, state and local government officials, school board members, parents, the education press, medical professionals, business representatives, and the general public. Based on the quality of the application, the most promising schools are recommended for site visits. The purpose of a visit is to verify the accuracy of information the school has provided in its nomination form and to gather any additional information requested by the panel. Experienced educators, including principals of recognized schools, visit and observe the schools for two days and submit written site reports for each visit. The panel considers the reports and makes recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Education, who then announces the names of the schools selected for recognition. No Department of Education employees are directly involved in the review process.

- In the first three years of the program, the majority of recognized schools were located in wealthy, suburban districts. Consequently, we urged States and CAPE to encourage and provide help to rural and urban districts so as to increase the number of such schools participating. We have invited State representatives who have been successful in nominating a more diverse group of schools to share their strategies at the annual State liaisons briefing; we have provided them with copies of "winning" urban and rural school nominations as models; and we have encouraged States to hold technical assistance meetings for potential applicants in accessible locations. We have also made it a point to include a number of individuals experienced in rural, urban, and even suburban schools undergoing significant demographic changes as national review panelists and site visitors. Not only will they know outstanding schools in these settings, but they will be able to provide useful comments for our feedback to schools who might not be successful in

their first attempt at recognition but may choose to make changes and apply in future years. We also collaborated with the Southern Regional Council to produce a videotape on six recognized middle and high schools that are effectively educating "at-risk" students.

- The Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes institution-wide excellence rather than particular school programs. For a school to be designated a Blue Ribbon School, it must demonstrate that it is effectively meeting the needs of all of its students. Schools are asked in the program's nomination form to answer such questions as: How is your instructional program adapted to the needs of special populations, such as special education, Chapter 1, limited-English proficient, and students in need of remediation? and What special opportunities do you provide for advanced study or enrichment for unusually talented or motivated students?

- Every effort has been made to avoid any politicization of the selection process. Two levels of review take place to ensure that a diversity of viewpoints and geographic representation are included on the 100-member Review Panel and among the 230 site visitors. Schools are judged on their merits, and the recommendations of the Review Panel on the schools to be recognized are final. It is program policy that there be no appeals process once decisions are made.

Answers to Specific Questions:

(1) In terms of actual awards made, when proportion of national student enrollment is taken into account, are school districts in urban and rural areas as likely as suburban school districts to receive Blue Ribbon Schools awards?

According to the latest U. S. Department of Education figures (1987-88), the student enrollment (public only) in urban, rural, and suburban districts is as follows:

Urban - 43%
Rural - 39%
Suburban - 18%

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Page 4 - William D. Ford

The % of Blue Ribbon Schools located in urban, rural, and suburban schools districts from 1986-87 to the present based on data provided in the School Characteristics section of the school nomination form is as follows:

Cycle	Urban	Rural	Suburban
1986-87	30%	31%	39%
1987-88	25%	30%	45%
1988-89	28%	32%	40%
1989-90	35%	26%	39%
1990-91	36%	23%	41%

(2) What percentage of schools receiving awards in each cycle had 50% or more of their students from low income families? What percentage of enrollment in award winning schools was of students from wealthy families?

The % of recognized schools with 50% or more students from low-income families in each year of the program is as follows:

1982-83	(S)*	4%
1983-84	(S)	6%
1984-85	(S)	5%
1985-86	(E)**	12%
1986-87	(S)	2%
1987-88	(E)	11%
1988-89	(S)	4%
1989-90	(E)	8%
1990-91	(S)	3%

* - S stands for Secondary School Program.

** - E stands for Elementary School Program.

Page 5 - William D. Ford

The information provided in response to (2) above is derived from school responses to the following question in the nomination forms: Students who qualify for free/reduced price lunch: _____% _____ Total Number. Since schools were not asked to provide any further information about family incomes of students, we cannot answer the second part of the question.

(3) What percentage of the schools receiving awards in each cycle had more than half of their enrollments made up of Black or Hispanic students? What percentage had 75% or more?

The following information is derived from data provided in the School Characteristics section of each nomination form:

Cycle	% of Recognized Schools with 50% or More Black or Hispanic Students	% of Recognized Schools with 75% or More Black or Hispanic Students
1982-83*	8%	3%
1983-84*	9%	4%
1984-85*	4%	1%
1985-86*	16%	7%
1986-87	5%	3%
1987-88	7%	3%
1988-89	7%	2%
1989-90	7%	3%
1990-91	7%	4%

* Analyses include only public schools. Analyses from 1986-87 to the present include both public and private schools

Page 6 - William D. Ford

(4) What proportion of the award winning schools are rural schools?

The following information is derived from data provided in the School Characteristics section of each nomination form:

Cycle	% of Recognized Schools from Rural Areas
1982-83	19%
1983-84	15%
1984-85	12%
1985-86	11%
1986-87	31%
1987-88	30%
1988-89	32%
1989-90	26%
1990-91	23%

(5) How frequently have schools been recognized for strong special education programs?

As mentioned in the background information, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes total schools rather than specific programs. All schools have to provide information about their special education programs in response to a question about program adaptation for special needs students. Reviewers might commend a school specifically for its special education program, but are not required to do so. The weight given to the quality of special education in determining whether a school should be nationally recognized is related to the number of students in the school requiring special education services. One category of private schools participating in the Blue Ribbon Schools Program is Special Education/Alternative Schools. Seven such schools have been recognized since the beginning of the program.

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Page 7 - William D. Ford

(6) How frequently have schools with high proportions of students who don't speak English as a first language been recognized for strong bilingual education programs?

The answer to this question is basically the same as that to (5), except that there are no special private schools designated for limited-English-proficient students.

(7) How many of the award winning schools were visited by the then Secretary of Education? by other representatives of the Department? by the President? Please provide information for each visit by month and year.

The Department has kept no systematic records on what award-winning schools were visited by Department staff or the President. Many of the visits that were made by Department staff at all levels resulted from specific requests from schools for a Department representative to participate in a local ceremony.

(8) How many total awards were made each year? Are increases in the number of awards more or less frequent in even numbered years?

Cycle	# of Schools Recognized	
1982-83	152*	*Private schools did not participate.
1983-84	264	
1984-85	281	
1985-86	272	
1986-87**	271	**Maximum nominations set at 689.
1987-88**	287	
1988-89**	218	
1989-90***	221	***Maximum nominations reduced to 525 to improve reliability of review process.
1990-91***	222	

Variations in numbers of recognized schools appear to be primarily related to the size of the pool of nominated schools.

Page 8 - William D. Ford

(9) Please provide information on student/teacher ratios and actual per pupil expenditures in Blue Ribbon Schools and figures adjusted for local cost of living.

Because of the different ways in which the number of teachers is determined from one school district to another, the Department has never analyzed and compiled student/teacher ratios. Similarly, information about per-pupil expenditures has not been solicited from schools since there is no uniform way for comparing these expenditures, e.g., sometimes capital outlays are included and sometimes not.

10. At my urging, the literacy bill signed into law earlier this Congress includes prison education programs as participants in the Blue Ribbon Schools Program. What steps have been taken to date to implement this provision? What steps are envisioned to make this work for effective reform in inmate education?

Since no funds have been provided for the 1991-92 Blue Ribbon Schools Program, no steps have been taken to include prison education programs.

ISBN 0-16-037284-4

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